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Generations and Ideological Change: Some Observations

CARL W. ROBERTS AND KURT LANG

THE DECADE of the 1960s was characterized by unusual political activism and challenge to conventional American values. It was the seedbed for many newly spawned movements. Young people and students were very much in the forefront of nearly all of them—the civil rights protests, the peace marches, communal living, women's consciousness raising, or making do with simple ("small is beautiful") technology. While claims made at the time about the "greening" of America (Reich, 1970), about the new consciousness of American youth (Haan, 1971; Slater, 1970; Yankelovich, 1969), or of a postindustrial mentality (Inglehart, 1971) appear, in retrospect, rather exorbitant, they entice questions about the lasting effects of these events and experiences on the outlook and ideology of those who came of age politically during this period.

The obvious point of departure for such an inquiry is Karl Mannheim's view of a generation as a population defined by their similar location in

Abstract The recollections of 28 cohorts of college graduates—all of them former recipients of Woodrow Wilson Fellowships for graduate study—of historical events between 1945 and 1971 and their participation in activities specifically associated with the peace movement and student activism of the 1960s were brought to bear on Mannheim's theory of generations. The analysis suggests proportionately greater sensitivity to the events of the 1960s among those who reached the age of 20 near the middle of the decade, a finding that bears out generational theory. But despite this apparently heightened sensitivity among those the right age at the right time, the effect of these recollections and experiences on attitudes expressed in 1973 was consistently overshadowed by even stronger attitudinal effects attributable to an early commitment to activism. The latter was more closely related to the family milieu than to having come of age politically in a particular historical period. The data were obtained from a mail survey of 1321 former Wilson Fellows.

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Public Opinion Quarterly Vol. 49:460-473 © by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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the historical process. "That people are born at the same time, or that their youth, adulthood, and old age coincide," wrote Mannheim, " . . . create[s] a similar location [in] that they are in a position to experience the same events and data, etc., and especially that these experiences impinge on a similarly 'stratified' consciousness" (1952: 297), at least insofar as they reside within some proximity and/or are part of the same polity. Although within these limits contemporaries of all ages are exposed to the same events, the older age groups will already have formed their own "natural view" of these events. As a result, what is a shared experience becomes stratified by a multiplicity of perspectives that are, so to speak, generational. Each age group brings its own point of view to bear on these events.

It is in periods of social change and political upheaval that political conflicts are most typically expressed in generational terms. Indeed, Mannheim's essay was a response to the literature produced in the aftermath of World War I (Mentré, 1920; Pinder, 1926; see Wohl (1977) for an excellent historical summary of this literature). Yet the identification of generational influences is complicated by the fact that many age group differences do not represent generational differences or "cohort effects," as they have come to be called. Some changes in outlook are associated with aging and the status changes a person experiences during the life cycle (see Mason and Mason, 1973; Glenn, 1977). Another potentially contaminating factor is cohort composition. For example, does the association of education with political liberalism explain the greater conservatism of older cohorts or is this due, as Converse (1976) has argued, to an increasingly liberal social milieu? He has further pointed out that the undue concentration on the variables of age and survey year has led researchers to ignore useful "side information" about generational processes.

Some sociologically oriented studies have nevertheless discerned signs of something akin to a "Depression generation." Some 20 or more years after the end of the Depression, this American "Depression generation," defined as those voting for the first time in 1932 or 1936, was still found to be somewhat more liberal (Campbell et al., 1960), more inclined to vote Democratic (Oppenheim, 1970; Lipset and Ladd, 1971), and more likely to report a Democratic party affiliation (Knoke and Hout, 1974) than the adjacent younger and older age groups. This bulge suggests a generational influence attributable to the experience with poverty, activism, and social reform that these age groups experienced during their formative years. But even these studies suffer from one deficiency: unlike the present study, they do not directly attempt to investigate what they assume, namely whether the observed age differences were in fact linked to persistent memories of these experiences.

The Study

Our data set comes from a 1973 mail survey by Lang and Lang (1978) of persons who had been recipients of a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship for graduate study between 1945 and 1971. The survey had been explicitly designed to explore the nature of cohort effects. The population was chosen to minimize potential contamination from changes in cohort composition, such as rising educational levels and increasingly less selective college cohorts. They were also proximate to the scene. Nearly all of the respondents had been on a U.S. campus during at least some part of the 1960s, either as students or as faculty, and many of the rest had retained some link with and/or were still oriented toward university life.[1] We can consider the group to be an intellectual and academic elite, sensitive to new modes of thought and political developments. This strategic position makes them of special interest because one can expect any ideological movement among them to have a "multiplier effect."

The original sample was selected from a list, generously supplied by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, of over 10,000 former fellows. Every sixth name was drawn, and this first drawing was supplemented with every second name of those who had received their award before 1958.[2] The procedure yielded the addresses of a total of 2576 persons to whom questionnaires were sent, of which 1321 were returned.

The 110 questionnaires returned as undeliverable were disregarded, and an overall response rate of 54 percent was obtained, which is highly satisfactory by the usual standard for such surveys and especially in view of the length of the original questionnaire. Since the survey was designed to explore the nature of cohort effects, our primary concern was that this response rate not differ across cohorts. Since it did not, the loss of respondents is unlikely to bias our analysis.

A key part of the questionnaire consisted of an inventory of events and experiences. Respondents were presented with a list of 26 political events, beginning with the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima (1945) and ending with Watergate, a controversy that was just heating up at the time of the survey, and asked to check the ones they "vividly remembered." Significant between-cohort differences in the recall of events provide us with further indicators of these different "inventories of experiences."

Respondents were similarly asked if they had "personally ever" had any of 20 experiences with a major political socialization potential. Of

[1] Of those who had completed their studies by 1973, 63 percent held faculty positions and another 13 percent were with foundation or other educational institutions.

[2] This was mandated by the great expansion of the program in 1958 to include more people from more fields of study. Data were weighted for differences in fields.

these, we selected to include in our analysis the ones with significant between-cohort differences as measured in our analyses of variance across age. They were having been "stoned on pot or hashish," present at a "large peace rally," having observed the police "busting up a demonstration," participation in a "campus sit-in," and living in a commune. All but the last were epoch-specific experiences insofar as they became widely accessible in the years of student activism. The item on "service in the armed forces" gave us two more such experiences, on the assumption, which we felt to be justified, that a tour of duty during the Vietnam war was a qualitatively different experience from service during World War II, the Korean war, or the more peaceful cold-war era. Although we did not specifically ask "when," we arbitrarily identified as Vietnam veterans those born after December 31, 1941; older respondents were assumed to have completed their tour of duty earlier. This could not have caused many errors because military service among the cohorts born in the early 1940s was at a low ebb.

Another part of the questionnaire consisted of 28 statements representative of the rhetoric of the 1960s and touching on themes raised at the time. Respondents were to indicate the extent of their agreement on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (definitely disagree) to 5 (definitely agree) with a midpoint of no opinion. Table 1 groups these items roughly according to their strongest intercorrelations; in addition to the mnemomics, the table gives the wording, mean score, and standard deviation of each item. Scores were reversed (as indicated by an R for "reverses") where disagreement (rather than agreement) with the statement was closer to the viewpoint dominant within the student movement.

To the extent that the high scores on these items are the residue of the 1960s, one can read them as a measure of the liberalizing influence of the time. We shall look at our data to see whether such an interpretation is justified.

The analysis was carried out in three steps. We began by subjecting the 26 events and 7 epoch-specific experiences to a principal component analysis[3] to search for clusters and patterns of a "stratified" historical consciousness. Second, we looked at the relation of these combinations of recall and experiences identified by these principal components to age, family milieu, and change during the college years. Finally, we performed a multivariate regression of the attitude items on the principal components in order to estimate their impact.

Events and Experiences

From the matrix of correlations among these 26 events and 7 experiences we extracted three principal components, which together account

Table 1. Dependent Variables (Mnemonic, Wording, Mean, Standard Deviation, *R*ight/*L*eft orientation)

Institutional legitimacy	
1) Freedom	One can achieve freedom for all within the institutional framework of contemporary American society. (2.92, 1.20, R)
2) Military honor	There is nothing dishonorable in volunteering for military service if it is to defend the U.S. against foreign attack. (4.23, 0.94, R)
3) Conventional change	Meaningful social change can be achieved by effective organizational work within conventional American politics. (3.44, 1.13, R)
4) Victimized criminals	People who rob and assault are more correctly viewed as victims of circumstances than as criminals to be held accountable for their acts. (2.13, 1.05, L)
5) Corporate danger	The power of large corporations in this country is a clear and present danger to democracy. (3.94, 1.21, L)
6) Rigged courts	Legal procedures are rigged against people who are poor and/or black. (3.91, 1.10, L)
7) Work ethic	Hard work and effort are more important than luck in getting ahead. (3.48, 1.11, R)
8) Economic solution	Further economic growth is no answer to the main problems the U.S. faces today. (3.86, 1.13, L)
9) Educated competence	A person's formal schooling and degree are a reasonable measure of his actual competence. (2.16, 1.11, R)
10) Parties same	On most really important issues there is practically no difference between Democrats and Republicans. (2.91, 1.26, L)
11) Science	Science has greatly contributed to the sum total of "human happiness." (3.33, 1.14, R)
Egalitarianism	
12) Socialism	Ultimately, private ownership of the means of production should be drastically curtailed in favor of a socialist mode of production. (2.89, 1.38, L)
13) National income	There should be legislation to provide a guaranteed national income to all regardless of whether they can work or do work. (3.23, 1.39, L)
14) Limit programs	Social programs should be limited to what we can support at present tax rates. (2.41, 1.25, R)
15) Admission to all	College or university should be open to anyone who seriously wants to study regardless of grades. (3.15, 1.42, L)
16) Admission by need	Admission to graduate and professional school should be geared to job opportunities in the various fields. (3.16, 1.29, R)

Minority/women issues	
17) Majority rights	These days one hears too much about the rights of minorities and not enough of the rights of the majority. (2.02, 1.12, R)
18) Admission quotas	Admission quotas for blacks and women to advanced study should be in proportion to their number in the population. (2.42, 1.34 L)
19) Racism	White racism is a worse crime than all the crimes by ghetto residents taken together. (2.57, 1.26, L)
20) Minority decision	Decisions that affect a minority must be made by the minority rather than by representatives of the majority. (3.02, 1.18, L)
21) Hiring quotas	Hiring and promotion should take no account of sex or race and be solely based on professional qualifications. (4.31, 1.15, R)
Unlawful means	
22) Theft	"Ripping off" what one needs is OK if one takes only from those who can afford it. (1.44, 0.79, L)
23) Political violence	Political violence, even when effective, is morally wrong. (3.42, 1.29, R)
24) Illegal protest	People who protest by violating a law should be prosecuted for it. (3.69, 1.09, R)
25) Bend law	It's OK to get around the law as long as you don't actually break it. (2.00, 0.98, L)
Freedom of expression/information	
26) Sex education	There should be no restriction on sex information available to either adults or children. (3.88, 1.27, L)
27) Release grades	A student's grades should not be released to anyone without his or her explicit prior permission. (4.04, 1.16, L)
28) Free speech	People should be allowed to say and do what they want as long as they are sincere. (2.21, 1.20, L)

for 44 percent of the variance. The remaining principal components (PCs) with eigenvalues of less than 2.0 appeared to describe the idiosyncratic effects of only one or two events or experiences and were therefore dropped. Table 2 lists the correlation of each event/experience with the three PCs.

PC 1 exhibits consistently positive loadings on all the events but only insignificant correlations with any of the experiences. It is more than likely that this component, given its all-or-none character, reflects a

[3] Unlike rotated factors that isolate dimensions common among a set of variables, principal components trace the dimensions with the greatest (here age-related) effect on subjects. Also see Morrison (1976).

Table 2. Principal Components of Epochal Experiences and Events

	Year (if event)	*PC 1*	*PC 2*	*PC 3*
Stoned		−.062	.307	.455
Peace rally		.036	.288	.477
Police bust		−.020	.231	.521
Sit-in		−.021	.234	.474
Commune		−.056	.120	.278
Service, Vietnam		−.026	.099	.049
Service, Korea		.191	−.375	.015
Hiroshima	(1945)	.399	−.607	.086
Taft-Hartley	(1947)	.344	−.532	.163
Wallace campaign	(1948)	.377	−.523	.176
NATO formation	(1949)	.349	−.555	.121
Fed. campaign	(1949)	.175	−.322	.077
Berlin airlift	(1949)	.438	−.563	.005
Korean war	(1952)	.529	−.453	−.042
McCarthyism	(1954)	.489	−.446	.037
Hungary	(1956)	.503	−.162	−.083
Bay of Pigs	(1961)	.627	.031	−.005
Nuclear disarm.	(1962)	.506	−.139	.181
Cuban missile crisis	(1962)	.549	.097	−.065
Bomb shelters	(1962)	.494	.049	.058
UN in Congo	(1962)	.521	.023	.108
Desegregation	(1963)	.613	.155	.059
Civil rights	(1964)	.599	.174	.006
Miss. summer	(1964)	.531	.150	.141
Free speech mvt.	(1965)	.551	.182	.140
Black power	(1966)	.619	.275	.032
Ghetto riots	(1967)	.601	.296	−.147
Primaries	(1968)	.542	.267	−.074
Demo. convention	(1968)	.541	.293	−.130
Kent State	(1970)	.506	.291	−.209
Cambodia	(1970)	.546	.348	−.096
Vietnam rallies	(1971)	.558	.378	−.021
Watergate	(1972)	.464	.299	−.224
% of variance		22.2	12.0	6.1
Eigenvalue		7.31	3.95	2.01

general rather than discriminate sensitivity to historical events postulated by the theory of generations. Such an interpretation of this component is consistent with its mild positive correlation ($r = .15$) with how important a respondent thought it was to "keep up with political affairs." Alternatively, the pattern of correlations expressed by this component may be an artifact produced by a tendency on the part of some respondents to check off more items as "vividly remembered." In either case, PC 1 serves to adjust our data for both, leaving the subsequent PCs to vary with recall related to location in history.

The heaviest loadings on the second principal component, all of them *negative*, are on the earlier events from 1945 to 1954, such as the dropping

of the bomb or the Berlin airlift, which many of the respondents were clearly too young to remember. This goes together with moderately positive loadings on recall of the Vietnam moratorium rallies, the invasion of Cambodia, and other more recent events and with similarly moderate loadings (also positive) on certain epoch-specific experiences, in particular pot smoking and attendance at peace rallies. The either/or pattern of the second principal component contrasts sharply with the all-or-none character of PC 1. High-scoring respondents are distinguished by their recall of events in different decades and by their participation in experiences specifically associated with the 1960s.

PC 3 was even more heavily loaded with these epoch-specific experiences but exhibited rather weak as well as inconsistent correlations with the events. The disproportionate activism of the high scorers on this component is confirmed by the correlations with having helped plan a rally; it was .39 for PC 3 compared with .13 for PC 2 and .08 for PC 1.

The correlations of each component with age (Table 3) help clarify their meanings. PC 1 exhibits an unambiguous monotonic increase with age. Older respondents had more vivid recall not only of remote events but also of events from the more recent past. This pattern not only affirms that older respondents were more aware of a past their juniors were too young to have directly experienced; it implies also an extension of this consciousness to the more recent events equally within the reach of historical experience of respondents of all ages.

PC 2 has the strongest correlation with age but the relation is negative and, in contrast with PC 1, does not monotonically increase with age. Scores peak among the 1945 to 1947 birth cohorts, whose members seem to have been the right age to be maximally affected by the events and activism of the period, and then drop off slightly among the youngest cohort not yet mature enough at the time to have retained vivid memories of these events. Thus PC 2 emerges as the clearest measure of the respondents' location in history.

Table 3. Correlations of Age and Ideological Labels with Three Principal Components

	Historical Sensitivity	*Generational Location*	*Activism*
Age	.33	−.64	−.03
Ideological label[a]			
Mother	.02	.09	.14
Father	.03	.06	.12
Self on entering college	.05	.06	.15
Friends at college	−.05	.13	.20
"Left" movement at college	−.01	.15	.10

[a] Respondents were asked to evaluate parents, selves at various times, and friends on a continuum ranging from 1 = far right to 7 = radical socialist or communist. Left movement is the difference between the respondents' position on the continuum when they "entered college" and when they "had finished (their) studies."

PC 3, which most clearly identifies the activist profile, is totally unrelated to age but exhibits instead strong correlations with more liberal descriptions of the respondents' parents (father as well as mother), of themselves on entering college, and of their friends in college (see Table 3). The pattern suggests an early socialization to protest among the activists, while movement toward the "left" while at college is less associated with activism than with the generational profile of PC 2.

For convenience we shall henceforth refer to PC 1 as the measure of *historical sensitivity*, PC 2 as the measure of *generational location*, and PC 3 as the measure of *activism*.

Generational Effects

The evidence of shift at college among those disproportionately sensitive to the events of the 1960s leaves open the question of what (if any) traces of the youthful enthusiasm generated under the specific circumstances of campus life in the 1960s survived into the 1970s. This question is addressed by way of multiple regression of the previously described 28 attitude items on the 3 principal components. The results are shown in Table 4.

In reading this table one should keep in mind that the principal components were standardized (with a zero mean and a unit standard deviation), while the attitude items had a 5-point range from definitely agree to definitely disagree. One should further keep in mind that on statements contrary to the rhetoric of the 1960s, a high score measures *dis*agreement rather than aggreement. Such items are footnoted. Thus an increase of one standard deviation in the historical awareness corresponds to an increase in *dis*agreement that freedom can be achieved within the existing American institutional framework, an item on which the score was reversed.

The constants in the fourth column of Table 4 are identical with the attitude means from Table 1, except for the "reversals," where they are 6 less these attitude means. Because the principal components are orthogonal, estimates of all effects, including these population means, are highly stable.

The item on which the three PCs together account for most of the variance (15.7 percent) is that private ownership of the means of production should be curtailed in favor of some kind of socialism (item 12). This and the items on freedom (item 1), military honor (item 2), conventional change (item 3), theft (item 22), and majority rights (item 17) are the only others on which the variance explained by the three components exceeds 10 percent. The median for all 28 items is 5.8 percent.

More interesting than these absolute magnitudes is the relative effect of each of the independent variables (historical sensitivity, generational

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis of 28 Political Attitudes on the 3 Principal Components among Epochal Events and Experiences

	Historical (PC 1)	*Generational (PC 2)*	*Activist (PC 3)*	*Constant*	R^2
Institutional legitimacy					
1. Freedom[a]	−0.065	0.245	0.442	3.083	.127
2. Military honor[a]	−0.051	0.186	0.341	1.775	.121
3. Conventional change[a]	−0.073	0.231	0.367	2.564	.108
4. Victimized criminals	−0.016	0.195	0.313	2.134	.090
5. Corporate danger	0.010	0.272	0.293	3.935	.081
6. Rigged courts	0.006	0.178	0.239	3.911	.054
7. Work ethic[a]	0.015	0.166	0.197	2.524	.040
8. Economic solution	−0.041	0.191	0.138	3.861	.035
9. Educated competence[a]	0.039	0.125	0.169	3.842	.027
10. Parties same	−0.074	0.069	0.226	2.913	.026
11. Science[a]	−0.014	0.083	0.142	2.674	.015
Egalitarianism					
12. Socialism	0.005	0.296	0.587	2.887	.158
13. National income	0.055	0.261	0.424	3.230	.092
14. Limit programs[a]	0.083	0.183	0.312	3.588	.063
15. Admission to all	−0.034	0.227	0.319	3.148	.054
16. Admission by need[a]	0.033	−0.144	0.063	2.845	.013
Minority/women issues					
17. Majority rights[a]	0.145	0.233	0.311	3.977	.100
18. Admission quotas	−0.051	0.213	0.346	2.418	.066
19. Racism	0.081	0.072	0.318	2.567	.050
20. Minority decision	−0.095	0.202	0.195	3.018	.050
21. Hiring quotas[a]	0.049	0.149	0.237	1.692	.044
Unlawful means					
22. Theft	−0.059	0.103	0.277	1.438	.101
23. Political violence[a]	0.028	0.193	0.390	2.576	.080
24. Illegal protest[a]	−0.044	0.150	0.279	2.306	.063
25. Bend law	−0.099	0.132	0.071	1.996	.030
Freedom of expression/information					
26. Sex education	−0.072	0.209	0.356	3.876	.077
27. Release grades	−0.015	0.196	0.224	4.042	.048
28. Free speech	−0.075	0.049	0.184	2.209	.020

[a] Scores were reversed on this item, making high scores those typical of the political left.

location, and activism) on these items individually and in their totality. The table gives no estimates of significance but, on the basis of Bonferroni's inequality, we require that estimates be significant at $p < .0018$ (.05/28) in order to achieve an overall .05 level of significance. By this criterion, estimates with an absolute value greater than .099 are significant—not a very rigorous criterion for substantive significance given the size of the sample. But at least it gives us an objective criterion to discard what is clearly dross and to focus on the subtleties of the underlying pattern. Measured by this standard, the contribution of historical sensitivity to these regression equations turns out to be negligible. Six-

teen of the 28 scores are actually negative but none of these approaches statistical significance. The only item that does is the disproportionately strong disagreement with the statement that "one hears too much about the rights of minorities and not enough of the rights of the majority," a theme frequently iterated during the 1960s by those with the greater awareness of history.

The measures of activism and generational location yield consistently positive correlations with a "liberal" response to these items. The score on nearly all items exceeds the minimum for probable significance. There is, however, one exception:Those high on the generational measure are more inclined than others to accept the proposition that "admission to graduate and professional school should be geared to job opportunities in the various fields." This could be a response to specific generational experience. Activism generally explains more variance than generational location. The median amount of variance explained by the former is 4.0 percent and by the latter 2.8 percent. The effect of activism is greatest on prosocialist attitudes, on the rejection of the idea that freedom for all is achievable within the institutional framework of contemporary society, on favoring a guaranteed national income, and on the acceptibility of violence as a political weapon.

Implications

The simple postulate that formative experiences and images of history help shape a person's political outlook received some, but limited confirmation from this study. Principal component analysis of this data set turned up a cluster of experiences with a distinctly more pronounced residue in the historical consciousness of the younger age groups than of their elders. The events and experiences of the 1960s stood out in their consciousness, in which cold-war events had a subordinate place.

Our conclusion about generational influences needs to be qualified by two observations: on none of the items that served as the dependent variable did our measure of generational location explain more than 5 percent of the variance. Second, these generational effects were consistently overshadowed by the effects of our measure of "activism," which seemed to reflect more directly the liberalizing influence of a politically supportive family milieu and of selective association with like-minded peers than any configurations of historical memories and experiences. The latter observation is consistent with the literature that describes the typical activist as less of a rebel against a conservative background than as the progeny of parents who are politically liberal and generally supportive, if not always overtly encouraging, of their offspring's militant involvement in various causes (Demerath et al., 1971; Solomon and

Fishman, 1964; Keniston, 1968; Flacks, 1967, 1970; Watts and Whittaker, 1966).

Several explanations suggest themselves for this rather weak overall relationship between patterns of recall of events and of personal experiences and ideology as measured by our questionnaire items. For one thing, the level of awareness and sensitivity to the climate on American college campuses among this academically "elite" group was generally high, allowing for little variation, so that explanations of ideological differences would have to be related to characteristics on which respondents differed, such as their backgrounds and current social position. In other words, these contemporaries were jointly exposed to the same historical events; the differences have more to do with how events were interpreted. If this is so, it suggests that the ideological changes that seemed to have occured during the 1960s were more akin to an epidemiological process, with infection limited by the size of the susceptible population, than to a metabolic process, whereby cohorts uniquely affected by things experienced during their formative years replace their predecessors.

That our principal component analysis turned up only one cluster of distinctly formative generational experiences for the younger and none for any older age groups is also consistent with a modified view of the generational process: Radical challenges are often couched in a generational rhetoric that appeals to cohorts when they first struggle for recognition and influence. The partisans develop an identity as a generation, which erodes as it is displaced by other identities consistent with the diverse interests that divide a polity.

On the other hand, one cannot dismiss the possibility that both the nature of our population, as noted above, and the limited time span covered by our observations would have obscured whatever generational effects existed. Although the spread in the ages of our population was roughly 30 years, the sparse representation of the older groups in the sample gives disproportionate weight to comparison among cohorts relatively close to one another in point of time; that is, the findings apply mainly to differences among those in graduate school during the 1960s. Given this age distribution, our inventory of items focused on postwar events and experiences associated with the period of activism. A longer historical time frame covering the Depression, the rise of Stalinism and of facism, as well as World War II might yield evidence of more sharply distinct generational profiles and ideological differences.

Putting our data on generational influences into context suggests that the events and experiences associated with the 1960s "radicalized" the susceptibles in two distinct ways: The political atmosphere afforded unprecedented opportunities for implementation to those who, by virtue

of prior socialization, were already disposed toward militant activism as indicated by their high score on PC 3. The same atmosphere had a more direct effect on those who scored high on generational location, who just happened to be at university, and who, being at an impressionable age, succumbed to the spirit of the time. It is highly likely that some of the latter, once the enthusiasm cooled, would revert to views they had previously held. Data not presented here show that a few had already taken this route as early as 1973.

In interpreting our findings, we need also to distinguish between two levels: the individual and the collective. Although the two patterns just described can coexist within the same individual, there is no evidence that generational location together with activism generated even more "liberalism" than one would expect on the basis of each separately. The two turn out to be "additive" rather than interactive, which is to say, they represent two alternative routes to activist involvement. Yet on the collective level, both processes contributed to the militant activism and the ideological climate we have come to associate with the 1960s. In the earlier phases of the student movement, the activists were more self-selected by background than later, when protest became legitimated into something close to a conventional activity (Friedman et al., 1972). The more long-term effects of this wave cannot be gauged from these data.

The problem of how members of different generations develop ideas that reflect their unique position in the historical process calls for more research. Meanwhile, a one-sided generational perspective on social and political change seems as untenable as the equally one-sided reductionism of historical change to the relations among social classes.

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A Latent Class Analysis of Tolerance for Nonconformity in the American Public

ALLAN L. McCUTCHEON

THE TOLERANCE for nonconformity among the citizenry is an issue of considerable interest to political and social analysts. Samuel Stouffer initiated the currently prevailing research tradition of tolerance in his seminal study of the American public's tolerance for communism. Recent criticisms of this tradition have called for an alternative conceptualization of tolerance in which intolerance may be directed toward either politically left groups or political right groups. Unfortunately, conventional data analytic techniques are not well suited for testing whether this alternative conceptualization provides a more accurate description of tolerance for nonconformity in the American public than Stouffer's. Latent class analysis methodology, however, allows a precise test of the hypothesis, and the results of an analysis based on this method are reported here.

The Stouffer Analysis

At the height of the Army–McCarthy hearings, in the summer of 1954, Samual Stouffer conducted a survey examining the American popula-

Abstract Latent class analysis is used to examine the proposition that political ideology plays a role in the public's tolerance for nonconformity. Results from an analysis of a representative sample of adult Americans indicate that political tolerance is neither a simple dichotomy (i.e., tolerant vs. intolerant) nor a undimensional continuum. Support is found for a four-class model of political tolerance, in which one segment of the American mass public is classified as generally tolerant, another as generally intolerant, a third as intolerant of the left, and the fourth as intolerant of the right. A log-linear analysis is used to examine the effects of education and age cohort on political tolerance.

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tion's "attitudes toward curtailing the civil liberties of . . . four kinds of nonconformists" (1966[1955]: 27). Two of the major findings spotlighted in that research were (1) that rank and file citizens appeared markedly less tolerant of Socialists, atheists, and Communists—whether openly admitted or only suspected—than did civic leaders, and (2) that the young and well educated also tend to be more tolerant. In every instance, the mass public expressed a greater willingness to deny nonconformists (or suspected nonconformists) the right to make a speech in the community, to have a book espousing their views in the public library, or to teach in a college or university. Stouffer suggested, however, that the long-term trend appeared to be toward greater tolerance, since the younger and better educated tended to be more tolerant than the older and less educated members of the population. Stouffer assumed that with increasing access to educational institutions, the mass of Americans would shift toward greater tolerance.

Building on Stouffer's analysis, Prothro and Grigg (1960) examined the twin issues of whether a consensus exists on abstract democratic principles of procedure and minority rights, and whether the mass public is willing to apply these principles to specific situations involving nonconformists. Their analysis uncovered a substantial consensus on the general principles, but not on the specific applications of these principles. The majority of the respondents expressed a willingness to bar Communists from mayoral candidacy and to disallow them from making speeches in the community. As Stouffer had found in his analysis, Prothro and Grigg found that persons with higher levels of education tend to be less inclined to curtail the civil liberties of unpopular groups.

McClosky (1964) has also reported finding higher levels of tolerance among political influentials than among the mass public. Combining elements of Stouffer's (1955) and Prothro and Grigg's (1960) analysis, McClosky found substantial support for general principles among both political influentials and the mass public. In the application of these general principles to specific situations and unpopular groups, however, McClosky reports that political influentials are more likely than the rank and file to express tolerant views.

Finally, Stouffer's prediction of an overall trend toward increased tolerance has been examined by Davis (1975) and Nunn et al. (1978). Both studies cover the period from Stouffer's 1954 study to the early 1970s and report evidence supporting the claim of an overall increase in the mass public's tolerance of nonconformists. Examining Stouffer's claim that this increase in tolerance would result from the net effects of the increase in higher levels of education among the public and cohort replacement, Davis sought to partition the 22 percent increase in tolerance between 1954 and 1971. In addition to the effects attributable to

increased education (4 percent) and cohort replacement (5 percent), Davis reports that most of the observed increase in tolerance (13 percent) reflects a general movement of all cohorts and educational groups toward more liberal positions on noneconomic issues.

An Alternative Conceptualization

The claim of an overall trend toward greater tolerance has been challanged on the grounds that the above analyses included the public's response to groups occupying only one end of the political spectrum. The groups used in the studies—Socialists, atheists, and Communists—all appear to fall towards the "left" end of a left-right continuum; the public's response to the groups on the "right" has not been examined. Therefore, the mass public's tolerance for these three groups may represent (1) an expression of overall tolerance, (2) an expression of tolerance for groups on the political left, or (3) a combination of these two. In light of this ambiguity, Sullivan et al. (1979, 1982) propose an important alternative conceptualization of tolerance that spotlights the role of left-right ideology.[1] Claiming that "to study tolerance correctly, one needs to include groups from the entire ideological spectrum" (1979:790; 1982), they found that unpopular left and right groups are selected when individuals are asked to choose their "least-liked group" from such a list. A substantial level of intolerance emerged in response to the question of whether the least-liked groups should be denied specific civil liberties. By implication, Sullivan et al. argue that groups on the right, as well as the left, of the political spectrum are targets of intolerance.

Recently, McClosky and Brill (1983) have examined several issues involving civil liberties. One of the many issues they address is the relation between political ideology and tolerance. They report that political liberals tend to be somewhat more tolerant than do conservatives. Findings similar to those of Sullivan et al. are reported by McClosky and Brill: "Conservatives are especially prone to choose the intolerant response when an item refers to an activity, group, or value to which they are particularly sensitive . . . [and] liberals are subject to a similar type of bias, displaying greater tolerance toward the groups and opinions they like than those they dislike" (1983: 299). This tendency of the mass public, they note, is also found among opinion leaders (1983: 422).

[1] Their conceptualization also involves a claim that tolerance (or intolerance) is a meaningful concept only when an individual opposes the group to whom he or she is willing to extend (or curtail) civil liberties. Since the willingness to curtail civil liberties to any group—whether one loves it, despises it, or is indifferent to it—is an intolerant attitude, and since their data indicate that people are sometimes *more* tolerant of groups they like the least (Table 2A, 1979: 787), it seems advisable to reject this restraint.

In light of this ongoing debate, a potentially important question is whether there are large numbers of the American public whose political tolerance extends only to groups on the left or the right of the ideological spectrum. Inasmuch as the American public does not use an abstract ideological framework, our conceptualization of tolerance would allow us to use measures based on responses to any set of unpopular groups. If it is likely that a significant portion of the population does use a left-right ideological framework, however, we must use measures for unpopular groups on both the left and right sides of the ideological spectrum. Moreover, if there has been an increase in the ideological content of the public's attitudes, as several researchers contend (e.g., Bennett, 1973; Field and Anderson, 1969; Margolis, 1977; Nie and Andersen, 1974; Pierce, 1970; Pomper, 1972; Stimson, 1975), we must conclude that the increases in tolerance for Communists, Socialists, and atheists observed between the 1950s and 1970s may reflect increasing tolerance only for groups on the political left.

By including in our analysis measures of tolerance for groups from a broader range of the ideological spectrum we can overcome one of the obstacles to achieving a more accurate assessment of political tolerance. A second consideration involves the issue of properly matching a method to the research question at hand. Specificallly, we require a method which will allow us to characterize an unobserved variable which "explains" the patterns observed among the tolerance measures. Although conventional factor analytic procedures provide one means for explaining the patterns between observed measures, it does so by identifying one or more continuous underlying dimensions. Our interest, however, is in examining whether there is a *category* of individuals who might be better classified as intolerant only of political right (or left) groups rather than being classified as either tolerant or intolerant—whether a three-category (e.g., tolerant/intolerant of the right (left)/intolerant), or even a four-category, conceptualization of political tolerance might more accurately reflect the stances taken by Americans than a dichotomous conceptualization. A technique currently being developed—latent class analysis—provides both (1) a means for identifying an unobserved variable consisting of a set of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories which are potentially polymorphous (nominal), and (2) a statistical test for assessing whether a two, three, four, or more category latent variable best fits the pattern of the tolerance responses.

Data and Method

The data for this study are taken from the 1976 and 1977 General Social Surveys (GSS), nationally representative, cross-sectional surveys of the

English-speaking, noninstituionalized adult population of the 48 contiguous U.S. states, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center.[2] The 1976 and 1977 GSSs are combined to provide a large sample for the analysis. The combined sample of 3029 respondents were each asked about their tolerance for five different groups: admitted Communists, atheists ("somebody who is against all churches and religions"), racists ("a person who believes that blacks are genetically inferior"), militarists ("a person who advocates doing away with elections and letting the military run the country"), and admitted (male) homosexuals. Thus, in addition to Stouffer's offerings of Communists and atheist, we include three additional groups that broaden the ideological range. While racism and militarism are typically targets for the antipathy of the political left,[3] homosexuality has typically been targeted by the political right.

Respondents were asked (1) whether members of each of these groups should be allowed to make a speech espousing these views in the respondents' communities, (2) whether members of each group should be allowed to teach in a college or university, and (3) whether the respondent would favor removing from the public library a book written by a member of each of these groups, espousing his views. A respondent was considered tolerant toward a group if he or she was willing to extend all three types of civil liberties to the members of that group. Thus, respondents had to answer tolerantly to each of three questions to be classified as tolerant:

> Suppose this____wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to speak? (Yes)
>
> Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not? (Yes)[4]
>
> Suppose he wrote a book which is in your public library. Somebody in your community suggests that the book should be removed from the library. Would you favor removing it or not? (No)

If a respondent was willing to deny any of the three types of civil liberties to members of a group, he or she was considered intolerant of that group.

The primary goal of this analysis is to characterize a latent variable with only a few categories (2–5) which accurately describes the underlying characteristics in the 32 possible response patterns for the five (groups) dichotomously coded (tolerant vs. intolerant) responses. Latent class

[2] The 1977 GSS utilizes a full probability (FP) design; the 1976 GSS utilizes a split sample—one, an FP subsample, and two, a probability sample with quotas (PSQ). A full discussion of the comparability of these designs is presented by Stephenson (1979).

[3] This type of militarism, it should be noted, is more praetorian than the usual definition of militarism as support for military might.

[4] A variation on this question was asked regarding Communists: Suppose he is teaching in college. Should he be fired, or not? (No).

analysis accomplishes this by describing the latent variable with the minimum number of classes within which the observed variables are mutually independent—a condition Lazarsfeld and Henry call local independence (1968:22). A Maximum Likelihood Latent Structure Analysis program (MLLSA), based on the formulations of Lazarsfeld (1950) and Goodman (1974a, 1974b), has been developed by Clogg (1977). The only a priori restriction placed on the latent class model is the number of classes for the latent variable; in this analysis, we used the unrestricted model (i.e., in which the latent variable is not required to fit a particular pattern in the observed tolerance responses). After analyzing the latent structure of tolerance, we used this variable to briefly examine the effects of cohort and education on political tolerance.

Analysis

POLITICAL TOLERANCE

Most of the earlier research on tolerance assumed either a two-class model in which respondents were classified as either tolerant or intolerant, or a unidimensional continnum on which respondents were located between the extremes of tolerance and intolerance. In the present analysis the two-class model was applied to the five-group tolerance dichotomies from the 1976 and 1977 GSS in order to test the fit between the data and a two-class model.

The adequacy of the fit of a model to the observed data is given by the likelihood ratio chi-square (L^2) of the model distributed with the model's degrees of freedom.[5] The decision results (at the .05 alpha level) are reported in the far right column of Table 1. Using this criterion the two-class model of political tolerance must be rejected ($L^2 = 240.85$ with 20 degrees of freedom). This is a significant finding. The data do not fit a two-class model (i.e., the respondents do not fall into two groups), thus we must reject the conceptualization of tolerance that classifies Americans as simply tolerant or intolerant.

It is possible, however, that tolerance responses could be placed on a continuum with those who are generally tolerant on one end, those who are generally intolerant on the other end, and those who are intermediate located between. This, of course, suggests that a multiclass latent structure could be consistent with the conceptualization of a tolerant to intolerant continuum. As we see in Table 1, the improvement obtained by adding a third class to the latent variable also nets a model with an inadequate fit to the data ($L^2 = 48.52$ with 14 degrees of freedom). Thus,

[5] Since these models are not hierarchical (Clogg and Goodman, 1984), a reduction in the chi-square criterion for model fit cannot be used.

Table 1. Likelihood-Ratio Chi-Squares for Differing Latent Class Models of Political Tolerance

Hypothesis	*Likelihood-Ratio Chi-Square*	*Degrees of Freedom*	*Decision (Alpha = .05)*
Independence model	4695.81	31	Reject
Two-class model	240.85	20	Reject
Three-class model	48.52	14	Reject
Four-class model	6.31	8	Accept

we must also reject the three-class (i.e., tolerant, intermediate, intolerant) continuum.

When we apply the four-class model, however, the model fit criterion is met—the resulting L^2 for the four-class model (6.31 with 8 degrees of freedom) clearly indicates that the 32 possible response patterns of tolerance can be represented as four distinct patterns.

What are the characteristics of the four classes of the latent variable? Specifically, can we characterize the four classes as constituting a tolerant to intolerant continuum? The estimates of the conditional probabilities—analogous to the factor loadings of factor analysis—and the latent class probabilities reported in Table 2 indicate that the four categories of political tolerance cannot be readily placed on a unidimensional, tolerant to intolerant continuum (i.e., the conditional probabilities do *not* always show monotonic increases or decreases across the four tolerance categories). Instead, the pattern of conditional probabilities indicates that the four classes can be designated Tolerant, Intolerant of the Right, Intolerant of the Left, and Intolerant. Of those respondents classified as Tolerant— estimated to be about 22 percent (.2228) of the sample—all are likely to have given tolerant responses for each of the five groups. Specifically, for these individuals the estimated conditional probability of tolerant responses toward each of the groups exceeds .90, with the highest conditional probability being tolerant toward atheists (.986) and the lowest being tolerant toward racists (.901).

Of those classified as Intolerant—estimated to be about 56 percent (.5603) of the population—all are *unlikely* to have given tolerant responses for *any* of the five groups. As the conditional probabilities in Table 2 indicate, those persons who are classified as Intolerant are most likely to be tolerant of homosexuals (.134) and least likely to be tolerant of atheists (.033).

The data reported in the two middle columns of Table 2 appear to support an interpretation of the tolerance classification that includes a left-right ideological dimension. We have labeled as Intolerant of the Right the class which is more tolerant of homosexuals and Communists

Table 2. Maximum Likelihood Estimates of the Conditional and Final Latent Class Probabilities for the Four-Class Political Tolerance Model

	Tolerant	*Intolerant of Right*	*Intolerant of Left*	*Intolerant*
Racists	.901	.002	.840	.081
Communists	.952	.576	.284	.042
Homosexuals	.959	.713	.573	.134
Atheists	.986	.418	.618	.033
Militarists	.920	.339	.394	.055
Final latent class probabilities	.2228	.1127	.1041	.5603

(.713 and .576, respectively) and less tolerant of racists (.002). We have labeled as Intolerant of the Left the class which is more tolerant of racists (.840) and less tolerant of Communists (.284). It is clear from these data that tolerance toward racists (.002 versus .840) and tolerance toward Communists (.576 versus .284) are the two most important responses distinguishing those who are Intolerant of the Right from those who are Intolerant of the Left. The pattern of tolerance for these two groups is the strongest indicator that these two classes bear a correspondence to a left-right political ideology. Tolerance toward homosexuals (.713 versus .573) and tolerance toward atheists (.418 versus .618), on the other hand, appear to play a more limited role in discriminating between the two classes. The lower level of tolerance for homosexuals among those who are Intolerant of the Left is similar to McClosky and Brill's (1983) findings that conservatives are less tolerant of nontraditional lifestyles and more antipathetic toward homosexuals. Although the higher level of tolerance for atheists among the latter class appears to be inconsistent with our interpretation of a left-right political ideology, the wording of the question about atheists which specifies someone who is "against all churches and religion" is ambiguous. McClosky and Brill have noted the ambiguity of this question and recommend the use of either "atheist" or "making fun of God and religion" as a clearer test of intolerance for atheists (1983: 132). Finally, the widespread acceptance of electoral democratic ideals helps explain the low level of tolerance for those who would "let the military run the country." Thus, tolerance toward militarists (.339 versus .394) appears to play virtually no role at all in discriminating between the two classes.

The classes represented by the two middle columns of Table 2 clearly indicate that the tolerance of some of the respondents is conditional upon the types of groups mentioned. Our interpretation of these two classes is based largely on their tolerance of Communists and racists, and, to a lesser degree, of homosexuals and atheists. Since tolerance of militarists plays no significant role in defining either group, this analysis suggests

that it might be dropped from inclusion. The fit of the tolerance patterns of these two classes to a left-right ideological continuum also suggests that other significant groups and issues (e.g., abortion) might provide an even clearer resolution to the ideological content of these classes. Using our classification, we find that an estimated 11 percent (.1127) of the population are Intolerant of the Right, and another 10 percent (.1041) are Intolerant of the Left.

As noted above, there are 32 possible response patterns for the dichotomously coded (tolerant versus intolerant) responses toward the five groups. Each of the 32 possible response patterns is observed in the data, from a low of 6 persons indicating tolerance of racists and Communists and intolerance of homosexuals, atheists, and militarists, to a high of 926 respondents indicating intolerance of all five groups. Using the estimated conditional probabilities we see that the respondents can be categorized by the response patterns into the four classes of the latent variable. This classification, which is analogous to assigning factor scores to subjects from a factor analysis, is reported in Table 3.

The responses of those people who are classified as either generally Tolerant or generally Intolerant follow a readily recognizable pattern. With one exception, individuals who give tolerant responses to each of the five groups, or who give an intolerant response to no more than one of the five groups, are classified as generally Tolerant—only those persons who are intolerant of Communists violate this pattern. The generally Intolerant are those persons who give intolerant responses to at least four of the five groups. Although these two classifications account for just over 80 percent (80.8) of the sample, they account for only 11 of the possible 32 response patterns.

Of the 21 response patterns that are not classified as either generally Tolerant or generally Intolerant, 10 are classified as Intolerant of the Right and 11 are classified as Intolerant of the Left. As we can see in Table 3, all of those classified as Intolerant of the Right are intolerant of racists, 3 of 5 (62.3 percent) are tolerant of Communists, and 4 of 5 (80.4 percent) are tolerant of homosexuals. Among those classified as Intolerant of the Left, all are tolerant of racists, and 6 of 7 (84.6 percent) are intolerant of Communists.

Before proceeding to our analysis of the effects of education and cohort on political tolerance, it is appropriate to note Stouffer's (1955: 50) comments on how *not* to read these data. Since we have included only a sampling of the possible groups and acts, we have not measured tolerance in any absolute sense—if different groups (e.g., antisemites, black militants) or different acts (e.g., teaching in a primary or secondary school) were used, the relative sizes of the classes would change. Therefore, we

Table 3. Four-Class Latent Variable Classification of 32 Political Tolerance Response Patterns

	Response Pattern[a]					*% of Class*
	R	*C*	*H*	*A*	*M*	
Tolerant	+	+	+	+	+	74.0
(n=616)	−	+	+	+	+	11.2
	+	+	−	+	+	4.2
	+	+	+	−	+	1.9
	+	+	+	+	−	8.6
Intolerant of Right	−	+	+	−	−	20.4
(n=265)	−	+	+	+	−	16.2
	−	−	+	+	−	14.7
	−	+	+	−	+	10.6
	−	−	+	−	+	11.7
	−	−	+	+	+	6.8
	−	+	−	+	−	6.4
	−	+	−	−	+	4.9
	−	+	−	+	+	3.8
	−	−	−	+	+	4.5
Intolerant of Left	+	−	+	+	+	19.5
(n=240)	+	−	+	+	−	16.7
	+	−	+	−	−	15.0
	+	−	−	+	−	13.3
	+	−	−	−	+	7.5
	+	−	−	+	+	6.3
	+	−	+	−	+	6.3
	+	+	−	+	−	5.4
	+	+	+	−	−	4.2
	+	+	−	−	+	3.3
	+	+	−	−	−	2.5
Intolerant	+	−	−	−	−	7.1
(n=1568)	−	+	−	−	−	4.4
	−	−	+	−	−	12.9
	−	−	−	+	−	3.3
	−	−	−	−	+	4.4
	−	−	−	−	−	68.0

[a] Symbol key: + tolerant toward group; − intolerant toward group; R racists; C Communists; H homosexuals; A atheists; M militarists.

cannot say that one-quarter of the American adult population is generally tolerant while over one-half of the population is generally intolerant. What we can say is that (1) for a significant segment of the population, the tolerance for freedom of expression is not independent of political ideology, and (2) those whom we have classified as generally Tolerant are *relatively* more tolerant of freedom of expression than are those whom we have classified as generally Intolerant. Our decision to avoid awkward phrasing such as "relatively more tolerant in general" was based on stylistic considerations and is not intended to imply a measurement of absolute tolerance.

COHORTS, EDUCATION, AND TOLERANCE

As mentioned earlier, Stouffer forecast an increase in the political tolerance he observed in the mid-1950s among the more highly educated and younger age groups. However, Stouffer, as well as others who have attempted to assess change in Americans' political tolerance, focused on tolerance toward Communists, Socialists, and atheists—groups on the political left. Our finding that tolerance of politically left groups does not necessarily signify tolerance of politically right groups demonstrates the potential for error when general conclusions regarding tolerance are based solely on attitudes toward politically left groups. Clearly, analysis of factors related to political tolerance and intolerance must consider the targets of intolerance (i.e., the left or right) as well as the amount or level of tolerance.

Four cohorts have been included in this analysis. For simplicity we have followed the cohort and education classifications suggested by Davis (1975). However it was not possible to keep Stouffer's and Davis's Older Cohort as a separate group, since by 1976 their ranks had shrunk considerably, and they represented too small a group to be analyzed separately. Here they have been combined with the Middle Cohort. The Middle Cohort, then, are those persons who were born in 1914 or before, reached age 16 in 1930 or before, and were 62 or older in 1976. The Younger Cohort are those persons who were born between 1915 and 1933, reached age 16 between 1931 and 1949, and were age 43–61 in 1976. The New Cohort are those persons who were born between 1933 and 1951, reached age 16 between 1949 and 1967, and were age 24–42 in 1976—persons in the New Cohort were too young for the Stouffer study and were first analyzed in the Davis study. Finally, the Fresh Cohort are those persons who were born in 1952 or later, reached age 16 in 1968 or after, and were age 17–23 in 1976—these persons were too young for either the Stouffer or Davis studies and are first analyzed here.

The second variable, education, was defined as the years of formal education completed by the respondents. Only those respondents who have graduated from high school received a coding of 12 or higher. Again following Davis's classification, those persons completing less than 12 years of formal education have been classified as Grade School, those completing 12 years of formal education have been classified as High School, and those completing more than 12 years of formal education have been classified as College.

Finally, the 32 observed response patterns were reclassified into the 4 categories of tolerance comprising the latent variable. That is, respondents were classified as Tolerant, Intolerant of the Right, Intolerant of the Left, or Intolerant.

The relation of cohort and education to tolerance was investigated

using log-linear analysis. Table 4 presents the lambda estimates from the saturated model for the log-linear analysis of the effects of cohort and education on the four classes of political tolerance. If we read down each subcolumn, we observe the relationship of the independent variables with each of the four classes of political tolerance.[6] Thus, we observe, as did Davis and Stouffer, that there are monotonic relationships between education and general Tolerance, Intolerance of the Left, and general Intolerance. The pattern of the relationship between education and general Tolerance is monotonic increasing—respondents with high levels of education are more likely to be generally tolerant than are those with lower levels of education. The effects of education on both general Tolerance and Intolerance of the Left are monotonic decreasing— respondents with lower levels of education are more likely to be generally Intolerant and Intolerant of the Left than are respondents with higher level of education. The relationship between education and Intolerance of the Right, however, does not indicate a monotonic pattern—high school graduates are more likely to be Intolerant of the Right than are respondents who did not complete high school or who have a college background.

Given these findings, can we agree with Stouffer and Davis that higher levels of education net higher levels of tolerance? If we focus on general Tolerance and Intolerance we see they are correct. If we focus on the politically oriented tolerant classes, however, we see that increasing education (1) is associated with *decreasing* tolerance of politically right groups, and (2) has no systematic (i.e., linear) effect on the tolerance of politically left groups.

The effects of birth cohort on general Tolerance and Intolerance reported in Table 4 are consistent with the conclusion of Stouffer and Davis. Persons in the younger birth cohorts are more likely than those in the older cohorts to be generally Tolerant, and persons in the older cohorts are more likely than those in the younger cohort to be generally Intolerant. When we turn to the left and right politically oriented classes, however, the Intolerant of the Right class indicates a pattern in which persons in the younger cohorts are more intolerant than persons in the older cohorts. The relationship between cohort and Intolerance of the Left, however, is not monotonic.

The cohort-education interactions reported in Table 4 enable us to examine the relative differences across cohorts in the effects of education on tolerance. We can see, for example, that education has less of an effect on generally Intolerant responses among members of the Fresh cohort,

[6] To aid the examination of patterns, all of the lambda estimates have been included even though many are redundant due to summing to zero. Only 33 of the reported lambdas are unique (i.e., there are only 33 degrees of freedom in Table 4).

Table 4. Log-Linear Estimates(λ) of the Cohort and Education by Tolerance Category

	Tolerant	*Intolerant of Right*	*Intolerant of Left*	*Intolerant*
Education				
Grade school	−.557*	−.009	.183*	.383*
High school	−.105	.210*	−.074	−.031
College	.662*	−.201	−.109	−.352*
Cohort				
Fresh	.376*	.467*	−.119	−.724*
New	.255*	−.088	.120	−.288*
Young	−.161	−.069	−.099	.329*
Middle	−.469*	−.311	.098	.682*
Cohort-education interaction				
Fresh				
Grade school	.134	.169	−.146	−.156
High school	−.073	−.313*	.322*	.063
College	−.061	.144	−.176	.093
New				
Grade school	.140	−.140	−.053	.053
High school	−.148	−.073	.104	.118
College	.008	.214	−.051	−.171*
Young				
Grade school	.106	−.012	−.024	−.069
High school	−.024	.091	−.187	.120
College	−.081	−.079	.211	−.051
Middle				
Grade school	−.379*	−.016	.223	.172
High school	.245	.295	−.239	−.301*
College	.134	−.279	.016	.129

* $\lambda > 1.96$ times its standard error.

and more of an effect among members of the New cohort. Moreover, among the members of the New cohort we see that higher levels of education substantially reduce the likelihod of a respondent being generally Intolerant, but increase the likelihood of his or her being Intolerant of the Right. Although other differences are of interest, the last we will note is that among members of the Fresh and Young cohorts education has less of an effect on general Tolerance than among the other cohorts. Clearly, the differences among cohorts in the effects of education on political tolerance is a matter for detailed examination in future studies.

In sum, the conclusions of Stouffer and Davis can be accepted only in a modified form. Consistent with their conclusions, the data presented in this article suggest that general Tolerance is higher among the younger cohorts and among the better educated, and that general Intolerance is higher among the older cohorts and among the more poorly educated. These findings suggest, however, that the effects of education and cohort are not the same for those persons with politically oriented tolerance—for these persons youth is associated with greater Intolerance of the

Right, and education is associated with decreased Intolerance of the Left. One additional, important point suggested by the data is that oversimple generalizations regarding the liberalizing effects of education should be avoided—while intolerance for politically left groups decreases with the level of education, there is no simple linear relationship between education and Intolerance of the Right.

Summary and Conclusions

One recent criticism of previous political tolerance research is that it has focused exclusively on tolerance expressed toward politically left groups, and thus fails to consider the possibility of politically oriented tolerance—that is, tolerance that is extended to only politically left or only politically right groups. This criticism has gained increased cogency in light of recent research suggesting that there has been an increase in the ideological content of the public's attitudes. Taking advantage of recent developments in latent structure analysis and tolerance responses about both politically left and politically right groups, we found that an adequate description of the observed tolerance responses must include four categories—generally Tolerant, Intolerant of the Right, Intolerant of the Left, and generally Intolerant.

With the data categorized according to the four latent classes of political tolerance, we found that Stouffer's and Davis's findings on education and cohort must be modified. Members of younger cohorts and persons with higher education are more likely to be generally Tolerant, and less likely to be generally Intolerant. Intolerance of the Left, however, is higher among persons with lower education. Intolerance of the Right is higher among members of the younger cohorts.

These results suggest a somewhat more complex pattern of political tolerance than has been considered in previous research. But they are also more consistent with many of the research findings on political ideology in the American public. Further research will need to focus on the factors affecting, as well as trends in, both general and politically oriented political tolerance, since it is here that we may best be able to examine the confluence of socioeconomic factors and support for civil liberties.

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Campaign Activities and Electoral Outcomes in Britain 1979 and 1983

IAN MCALLISTER

SINCE the rapid expansion of television in Britain and the United States in the 1950s, political parties have come to regard the electronic media as central to influencing voters. This emphasis on the television coverage of elections has been aided by the declining importance of various factors which have traditionally structured the vote, most notably party identification and social class (Sarlvik and Crewe 1983; Nie et al., 1976). As a result, national elections in most advanced industrial societies have become oriented toward candidate-centered media campaigns. It is arguably the party leader, rather than the party itself, who is better known to the electorate, and it is on the public image of the leader, packaged and presented through the electronic media, that the electoral fortunes of

Abstract Political broadcasting through the electronic media has largely displaced two older methods of influencing voters—canvassing and advertising in the press—as the dominant party campaign activity during elections. This article utilizes survey data collected during the 1979 and 1983 British general elections to estimate the reported effects of these three types of campaign activity on electoral outcomes. The results show that few voters report being influenced by canvassing and advertising, and the net effect on the vote is either small or nonexistent. By contrast, around 1 in 6 report being influenced by a party political broadcast, and those most influenced are eventual Liberal-Alliance voters. The net electoral effect of political broadcasting can range as high as 3.4 percent, but gains for the Conservatives and Labour are offset by the political broadcasting of competitors. The main exceptions are the Liberals in 1979 and the Alliance in 1983, who made a net gain of 1.5 percent and 3.3 percent of the vote, respectively.

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parties increasingly appear to depend (Hargrove, 1967; Nimmo and Savage, 1976; Weisberg and Rusk, 1970).

The electronic media's coverage of election campaigns has displaced two older forms of influencing voters. First, political canvassing, involving personal contact between the candidate or a party activist acting on his behalf, has traditionally been the tool of the mass party in persuading voters to change their political views. However, as Mackenzie (1970: 648) has noted, this relatively inefficient method was substantially undermined by the growth of the mass media in the 1950s and 1960s. Second, extensive political advertising in newspapers and magazines and through posters, which saw its heyday in Britain in the 1950s, has been largely displaced for the same reasons. In the media-conscious 1980s, "elections are won and lost in sitting rooms, not on doorsteps or poster sites" (Crewe, 1985).

This article uses Britain as a case study to examine the relative effects of these three methods of influencing voters during the 1979 and 1983 general election campaigns. Multivariate analysis is applied to two nationally representative opinion surveys which were carried out on or immediately prior to election day. Britain is a particularly appropriate country on which to focus such an analysis. It was one of the first countries to spawn the mass political party, and political canvassing, theoretically at least, still plays a major role in the campaign strategies of the main parties. Similarly, political advertising has been extensively used in the print media, but paid political advertising on TV and radio has been banned. In its place, a regulated system of granting free airtime to the political parties has operated. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, free political broadcasting—or party political broadcasts (PPBs) as they are known—were much sought after by the parties.[1]

Previous Literature

Political canvassing in Britain saw its origins in the extension of the franchise in the nineteenth century, when it became necessary to convince electors of the merits of a particular candidate by argument, rather than by financial inducements (O'Leary, 1962). With the emergence of the Labour Party in the late nineteenth century, with its trade union base and mass membership, canvassing became the major campaign activity (Kavanagh, 1970). Various studies in Britain have shown that canvassing produces tangible electoral gains. A study of canvassing in a London constituency in 1964 indicated that both main parties contacted between

[1] Political broadcasts outside election periods are known as party political broadcasts (PPBs) and during election periods as party election broadcasts (PEBs). To avoid confusion, the first term is used here to apply to both types of broadcasts.

one-third and three-quarters of the electorate (Holt and Turner, 1968), and a study of local elections showed that canvassing could appreciably improve turnout, which could disproportionately benefit the more active party if it were the only party canvassing in the area (Bochel and Denver, 1971, 1972).

It is not only the growth of the electronic media which has reduced political canvassing: the declining membership of the major parties, especially Labour, has reduced the potential pool of activists who are prepared to spend their time campaigning on behalf of their local candidate. For example, a 1978 survey showed that the Labour Party had around 250,000 members, but fewer than 60,000 could be judged as active (Whiteley, 1982: 114–115; see also Forrester, 1976; Martin and Martin, 1977). Both the Conservative and Liberal parties have suffered a similar, but less dramatic, decline in their mass memberships.

By contrast, political advertising developed only in the 1920s and 1930s, and it was only after 1945 that it became relatively sophisticated (Rose, 1967: 13). The central focus of advertising has been on displaying posters and on placing advertisements in newspapers and magazines. The Conservatives were the first to realize the potential of this form of campaign activity, and they retained an advertising agency in 1959 to manage the party's advertising campaign in that year's election. The advertising expenditure of both main parties peaked in 1959 and 1964, and declined thereafter—again largely as a result of the introduction of free TV airtime. This was in direct contrast to the United States, where the increasing use of advertising on TV—which had to be paid for—substantially increased party expenditure (Alexander, 1970: 91). Despite the availability of free TV airtime, however, poster and print advertising are still extensively used in British elections. In the 1979 election, for example, the Conservatives (through their advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi) made extensive use of advertisements in the tabloid newspapers, in women's magazines, and, for the first time, in cinemas (Bell, 1982: 14).

In Britain, television broadcasting began to expand rapidly in the 1950s, from 4.3 million licenses in 1955 to 10.5 million in 1960, and 15.6 million in 1970 (Butler and Sloman, 1975: 397). The first PPBs were scheduled to take place during the 1950 general election campaign, but were canceled because the parties decided that the broadcasts should go out on sound only (Goldie, 1977: 61). The first television PPBs took place during the 1951 campaign, when each of the three main parties—Conservative, Labour, and Liberal—were given one 15-minute broadcast.

Two main categories of PPBs exist. The first and most common are those which are broadcast during a general election campaign. By convention, the outgoing government has the last PPB, which is traditionally

two nights before polling day, since the eve of the election is left free from political comment and discussion. Second, there is an annual series of PPBs conducted outside election campaigns. Allocating time for both types of political broadcasting is governed by the semiformal Committee on Party Political Broadcasting, which includes representatives of all parties with parliamentary representation, the BBC, and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (the commercial TV regulating agency). The chairman of the committee is the Lord President of the Council, who is also Leader of the House of Commons. The criterion for allocating time for nonelection PPBs is generally the electoral support of the parties at the previous general election (Smith, 1979: 17), but for election PPBs the criteria are numerous and negotiable—votes, seats, and candidates are most often used.

Table 1 lists the minutes of free airtime given to the three major parties between 1959 and 1983, divided between nonelection PPBs and general

Table 1. Minutes of Party Political Broadcasts by Party, 1959–1983

	Nonelection				*Election*			
	Con	*Lab*	*Lib*		*Con*	*Lab*	*Lib*	*SDP*
1959	na	na	na		95	95	25	na
1961[a]	80	80	15					
1962[a]	80	80	15					
1963[a]	75	75	25					
1964[a]	75	75	25					
1964[b]	40	40	15		75	75	45	na
1965	60	60	20					
1966	60	60	20		75	75	45	na
1967	60	60	20					
1968	60	60	20					
1969	60	60	20					
1970	60	60	20		50	50	30	na
1971	60	60	20					
1972	60	60	20					
1973	60	60	20					
1974	60	60	30	(Feb)	50	50	30	
				(Oct)	50	50	40	
1975	60	60	30					
1976	60	60	30					
1977	60	60	30					
1978	60	60	30					
1979	60	60	30		50	50	30	
1980	60	60	20					
1981	60	60	20					
1982	60	60	20					
1983	60	60	20		50	50	40[c]	

[a] From July the preceding year to June in the current year.
[b] From July to December.
[c] Allocated to SDP/Liberal Alliance, not to separate parties.
SOURCES: 1959–1979 Pinto-Deuschinsky (1981: 266); 1980–1983 information from the Independent Broadcasting Authority.

election PPBs. Since the mid 1960s, the two main parties have had a consistent share of nonelection and election broadcasting, each with 60 minutes. Except for the 1974 to 1979 period, when they had 30 minutes, the Liberals have had 20 minutes of airtime in nonelection periods, and between 30 and 45 minutes in election periods.

During the negotiations over political broadcasting in the 1983 general election, the Conservative and Labour parties failed to agree on the amount of time to be given to the SDP/Liberal Alliance, which had been making substantial inroads into their support in opinion polls and by-elections (McAllister and Rose, 1984: Table II.3). The solution was found by the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the BBC, who unilaterally imposed a compromise giving the two main parties a total of 50 minutes airtime, and the Alliance 40 minutes. The only instance in which a more formal arrangement was made occurred during the 1975 EEC referendum, when the pro- and anti-EEC umbrella campaigns were legally required to have equal airtime (Butler, 1978: 214).

Minor and regional parties have represented a recurring problem in the allocation of time. Because minor parties, by definition, receive low proportions of the vote, they fail to gain TV exposure; because they fail to qualify for TV exposure, it is argued that they receive low percentages of the vote. Hence, it is often argued that the PPB system acts in favor of the status quo. This problem is exemplified by the Communist Party and the National Front, which have frequently put up sizeable numbers of candidates across the country—in 1979 the Communists contested 58 seats and in October 1974 the National Front contested 90—but have either been excluded from PPBs altogether, or are given one broadcast in nonpeak time. To qualify for a general election broadcast, a party must nominate 50 or more candidates. For example, in the 1983 general election, three parties—the National Front, the British National Party, and the Ecology Party—all had 50 or more candidates each but little or no electoral support, and each received only one five-minute PPB in nonpeak time.

Some revision of these rules was forced by the electoral success of Scottish and Welsh nationalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Committee on Party Political Broadcasting now stipulates that the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru should have time provided in their respective countries according "to their standing within these countries" (Smith, 1979: 17), rather than across Britain as a whole. In the 1983 general election, the Scottish National Party received three 10-minute PPBs, which were broadcast only in Scotland, while Plaid Cymru received one 10-minute PPB in Wales. In order to allow the three main parties to reply to these broadcasts, the three were also permitted separate broadcasts in Scotland and Wales, different from (though not in addition to) those aired in the rest of the country.

PPBs normally run between 5 and 10 minutes. In the 1983 general election campaign, the Labour Party made use of all of its allotted 50 minutes, whereas the Conservatives used only 25 minutes of this time because they choose to broadcast mostly five-minute PPBs. They argued that 10 minutes was too long for a political broadcast, and unsuccessfully canvassed in both 1979 and 1983 for two-minute broadcasts (Bell, 1982: 15). PPBs are usually run simultaneously on all TV channels, although this is now no longer mandatory and a particular channel may show the broadcast at a time that fits in with its timetable, provided it is still in the allotted time band.

Previous studies in the U.S. of the electoral consequences of the television coverage of politics have generally come to contradictory conclusions. Converse (1966) analyzed the television coverage of the 1952 campaign and found that those who used several media sources were the more likely to change their vote. Others, however, have shown that defectors are more likely to be concentrated among those using the fewest media sources (Dobson and St. Angelo, 1975; Dryer, 1971). More recent research has argued that television exposure has few, if any, consequences for voting behavior (Bybee et al., 1981; Wattenberg, 1982). In Britain, the limited research that has been done has shown that political broadcasting seems to have a neglible impact on voting (Blumler et al., 1978; Blumler and McQuail, 1968; Seymour-Ure, 1974).

Data, Measurement, and Method

The data come from the 1979 and 1983 BBC Gallup surveys (*N*s = 2434 and 4146, respectively), which were carried out on or immediately before polling day. Both surveys are weighted, but since the weighted *N* is adjusted to the true *N*, significance tests are unaffected.

The variables used in the analysis are given in Table 2, along with their means in the two surveys. The main dependent variable is a dummy variable for vote in each election; it combines the vote of those who had already voted in the general election with the intended vote of those who had not at the time voted. Nonvoters or intending nonvoters are excluded from the analysis. Voting decisions reported as influenced by a party canvasser or by political advertising are measured by dummy variables; because the numbers in the separate party categories are small (see Table 3 below) these are collapsed into a single category. PPBs are measured by whether or not the respondent reported having his or her voting decision influenced by a PPB, broken down by the three main parties.

A range of social structural control variables are included in the analysis, covering the respondent's age, sex, race, place of residence, occupation, and trade union membership. One important political control vari-

Table 2. Variables and Means

Variable	*Scoring*	*Means*[a] *1979*	*1983*
Voting, party identification			
Conservative voter	1=yes, 0=no	.41	.40
Labour voter	1=yes, 0=no	.35	.26
Liberal-Alliance voter	1=yes, 0=no	.13	.22
Conservative identifier	1=yes, 0=no	.42	.42
Labour identifier	1=yes, 0=no	.42	.34
Liberal-Alliance identifier	1=yes, 0=no	.14	.16
Broadcasting, canvassing, advertising influence			
Conservative PPB	1=yes, 0=no	.05	.04
Labour PPB	1=yes, 0=no	.07	.05
Lib-Alliance PPB	1=yes, 0=no	.06	.05
Party canvasser	1=yes, 0=no	.05	.04
Advertising	1=yes, 0=no	.02	.02
Control variables			
Age	Years	44.2	45.6
Gender	1=male, 0=female	.47	.48
Scottish resident	1=yes, 0=no	.10	.10
Welsh resident	1=yes, 0=no	.04	.05
Head of household white collar worker	1=yes, 0=no	.40	.43
Trade union member	1=yes, 0=no	.41	.35

[a] For those who voted in each general election only.

SOURCE: BBC Gallup 1979 and 1983 surveys, conducted 2-3 May 1979 (N=2434) and 8-9 June 1983 (N=4146).

able which has to be added to the equation is party identification. Because a person's vote is determined *inter alia* by his or her predispositions to one of the main parties, any accurate estimate of the effect of campaign activity must control for party identification. Like vote, partisanship is scored as a dummy variable. The full predictive equation is therefore:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Vote} = {} & a + b_1\text{PPB} + b_2\text{Canvass} + b_3\text{Advert} + b_4\text{Age} + b_5\text{Sex} \\ & + b_6\text{Scot} + b_7\text{Wales} + b_8\text{HHWhiteC} \\ & + b_9\text{Union} + b_{10}\text{PtyId}\end{aligned}$$

The partial regression coefficients for this equation are shown in the Appendix.

The analysis relies on ordinary least squares regression methods, which assume that variables are, to a reasonable approximation, linear and additive (Hanushek and Jackson, 1977; Kmenta, 1971). There are well-known reservations about using a dependent variable which is dichotomous, but research has shown that the risks are minimal provided the variable is not highly skewed and there is a large sample, both of which apply here (Gillespie, 1977). However, to ensure that the OLS results

were not biased, a LOGIT specification was estimated, and the coefficients for these are shown in the Appendix (White, 1978), and, with few exceptions, the coefficients are equivalent to their OLS counterparts[2]. Missing data are treated by the "pairwise present" procedure, which is statistically preferable to the usual alternatives (Hertel, 1976).

Electoral Consequences

For most voters, television is the primary source of political information during an election campaign. In the 1964 general election campaign, for example, Butler and Stokes (1969: 219) found that more than twice the people who said they followed the campaign said they relied more heavily on television for information than on the print media. The proportion of voters who actually watch PPBs on television has risen impressively since the 1950s. In the 1955 election, the average voter saw just over one PPB, a figure which rose to 3.1 PPBs in 1959 and 4.5 in 1964 (Blumer and McQuail, 1968:36; see also Blumler, 1975). In the 1979 British Election Survey, 3 in every 4 voters said they had seen a Conservative or Labour PPB, while 2 in 3 had seen a Liberal PPB. By contrast, only 16 percent had heard an election broadcast on radio, and only 4 percent had heard a local candidate speak at an indoor meeting. Only election addresses rival the coverage of PPBs. In 1979 a similar proportion who had watched an election broadcast had also glanced at an election address, but less than half said they had read it

Given the extensive penetration of PPBs, it might be expected that their influence on electoral choice is substantial, which is indeed the perception held by the political parties. However, as Table 3 shows, the proportions who report having been influenced by a PPB—as opposed to simply watching it—are small. Across the whole electorate, 15 percent of 1979 voters reported being influenced by a PPB, compared to 16 percent in 1983. Both Conservative and Labour PPBs influenced a consistent proportion of voters across the two elections, while the Alliance figure for 1983—8 percent—was double the 1979 figure for the Liberals, reflecting their enhanced electoral support (see also Crewe, 1981: 270–273).

Not surprisingly, voters are most likely to be influenced by broadcasts run by their chosen party, rather than the opposition, indicating that broadcasts generally have a reinforcing rather than a persuading role. For

[2] Those variations which exist are probably caused by two idiosyncracies of the particular program used to estimate the LOGIT coefficients: missing values are not permitted (so these had to be coded to the mean); and the program would not handle more then 2000 cases, meaning that an appropriate sample of the data had to be created, since both the 1979 and 1983 datasets have 2434 and 4146 cases, respectively.

Table 3. Reported Influence of Broadcasting, Canvassing, and Advertising on the Vote, 1979 and 1983[a]

	1979 Vote (%)				*1983 Vote (%)*			
	(All)	*Con*	*Lab*	*Lib*	*(All)*	*Con*	*Lab*	*All*
Political broadcasting								
Con PPB	(7)	12	3	5	(6)	9	2	6
Lab PPB	(6)	3	11	4	(5)	3	9	5
Lib-All PPB	(4)	0	1	28	(8)	3	3	26
Total political broadcasting	(15)	14	14	30	(17)	14	13	29
Political canvassing								
Total	(3)	3	3	3	(1)	1	1	2
Political advertising								
Con poster/advert[b]	(1)	2	1	0	(1)	2	0	2
Lab poster/advert[b]	(1)	1	1	0	(2)	1	3	1
Lib-All poster/ advert[b]			na		(1)	0	0	5
Total political advertising	(2)	3	2	0	(3)	3	3	2
(*N*)	(2262)	(936)	(785)	(286)	(3407)	(1515)	(987)	(846)

[a] The questions were as follows: 1979: "When you decided which way to vote, was it for one or more of the following reasons on this card?" (1983): "When you finally decided which way to vote was it for one or more reasons on this card? Please mention all the reasons that apply." The questions permitted multiple responses. Nonvoters excluded from the analysis.

[b] "Advert" refers to a newspaper advertisement.

example, in 1979, 11 percent of Conservative voters reported being influenced by a Conservative broadcast, but only 3 percent by a Labour broadcast. In 1983, voters were again more influenced by their own party's PPBs. The pattern among Liberal partisans in 1979 and Alliance partisans in 1983 differs from the other two main parties in the relative importance of PPBs. In 1979, no less than 28 percent of Liberal voters said they had been influenced in their voting decision by a Liberal PPB, a figure which was only two percentage points less in 1983. This reflects the turnover of Liberal-Alliance support in general elections, and the concomitant likelihood that such voters will be more susceptible to short-term influences on their voting behavior (Alt et al., 1977:58–61; Himmelweit el al., 1981:Ch. 10; Lemieux, 1977).

By contrast, the reported influence of canvassing and advertising is relatively negligible. In 1979, 3 percent reported being influenced by a party canvasser, a figure which dropped to 1 percent in 1983. Political advertising, defined as advertising either in a newspaper or on a poster, influenced 2 percent of voters in 1979, and 3 percent in 1983. Once again, the Alliance appeared to make the most gains in 1983, influencing 5 percent of their own eventual voters.

It is therefore clear who reported being influenced by party broadcasts and by canvassing and advertising during the two election campaigns, but how did this actually influence electoral outcomes? In other words, what was the likelihood that voters who had been influenced by a PPB actually voted for that party? Table 4 provides the answer to this question by

Table 4. The Effect of Broadcasting, Canvassing and Advertising on the Vote, 1979 and 1983[a]

	1979 Vote			*1983 Vote*		
	Con	*Lab*	*Lib*	*Con*	*Lab*	*All*
Panel A: partial regression coefficients						
Conservative PPB	17*	−4	−8*	18*	−12*	−3
Labour PPB	−3	15*	−8*	−5	18*	−6
Lib-Alliance PPB	−19*	−30*	67*	−13*	−16*	42*
Canvassing	−1	4	0	−5	−7	13*
Advertising	19*	−7	−7	0	10*	−3
Panel B: net percentage change in the vote[b]						
Conservative PPB	1.2	−0.3	−0.6	0.9	−0.6	−0.2
Labour PPB	−1.0	0.9	−0.5	−0.2	0.8	−0.1
Lib-Alliance PPB	−0.8	−1.2	2.7	−1.0	−1.3	3.4
Canvassing	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Advertising	0.4	−0.1	−0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0

*$p<.05$.

[a] Partial regression coefficients from a regression equation controlling for the variables in equation (1) above. The analysis excludes nonvoters. For definitions of variables, see Table 2.

[b] Estimated from the results in Panel A, evaluating at the mean. For example, the net effect of a Conservative PPB on the Conservative vote in 1979 is b* ConPPB, which is .17* 12 = 2 percent.

giving the results of a regression analysis predicting the vote from a range of variables. Panel A of Table 4 gives the partial regression coefficients which reflect the probability of voting for a party if the respondent reported being influenced by the type of campaign activity in question. Thus, Conservative voters who were influenced by a Conservative PPB in 1979 were 17 percent more likely to vote for the party, other things (including party identification) being equal. They were also 19 percent less likely to vote Liberal if they reported being influenced by a Liberal PPB; Labour PPBs made little or no difference. The pattern between the two main parties in the two elections is substantially similar, and voters who were influenced by a Conservative or Labour broadcast were between 15 and 18 percent more likely to vote for that party, net of other things.

Once again, the Liberal and Alliance broadcasts provide a significantly

different pattern. In 1979, a person who reported being influenced by a Liberal PPB was some 67 percent more likely to vote for that party than those reportedly influenced by either the Conservative or Labour broadcasts were likely to vote for these parties. This pattern remained similar—albeit somewhat reduced—in 1983, when 42 percent of voters influenced by an Alliance PPB actually voted Alliance.

Canvassing made no significant difference to voting intention in 1979, and only a minor difference to Alliance voting intention in 1983— unfortunately for the thousands of party activists who devoted their time to trying to persuade voters. Political advertising benefited the Conservatives in 1979 on a level equal to their broadcasts, while Labour made some electoral gain from their political advertising in 1983.

These figures tell us the probabilities of voting for a party but do not tell us the percentage change this made to the votes of the three main parties. For example, the probability of voting for a particular party after reporting influence by one of the three campaign activities can be large, but the net effect on the vote may be small because the activity is restricted to a small number of voters. These estimates are given in Panel B of Table 4, and are calculated by multiplying the partial regression coefficients in Panel A by the means of the particular variable. The results show that the effect on the vote is variable. In 1979 the Conservatives gained 1.2 percent of the vote from their broadcasts, compared to 0.9 percent for Labour, and 2.7 for the Liberals. In 1983, neither of the two main parties made more than 1 percent, while the Alliance gained 3.4 percent. Overall, the gains to be made from canvassing or advertising were either nonexistent or negligible. The Conservatives gained 0.4 percent of the vote from advertising in 1979, the Alliance 0.2 percent of the vote from canvassing.

Much of the apparent gains, however, made from PPBs by the two main parties are substantially reduced or canceled out by the activities of competitors. In the 1979 election, the Conservatives made a total gain of 1.7 percent from canvassing, advertising, and their own political broadcasts, but lost a total of 1.8 percent of the vote from the combined effect of Labour and Liberal political broadcasts and from canvassing and advertising. In the 1983 election, both the Conservative and Labour parties ended up with a net loss in votes of 0.2 and 0.8 percent, respectively, while the Alliance made a net gain of 3.3 percent of the vote.[3]

[3] One further hypothesis concerning political broadcasting is the effect of political interest. It is suggested that those with more political interest are less likely to be influenced by broadcasts (Bogart, 1968; Clarke and Ruggels, 1970). This hypothesis was tested using the 1979 data (the 1983 data did not include a political interest question), but the results showed no significant variation in the vote due to broadcasting among different political interest groups.

Conclusion

The analysis has therefore pointed to three important aspects of campaign activity in Britain, and its effect on electoral outcomes. First, political broadcasting, as is generally agreed, is now the dominant campaign activity in influencing voters. Canvassing voters face-to-face or advertising in the print media or through posters influences significantly fewer voters and has little electoral importance. Second, although the overall penetration of political broadcasting within the electorate is large—around 3 out of every 4 voters are likely to have watched a major party broadcast on television—those who report being influenced by them in how they vote are a substantially smaller proportion of the electorate. This result accords with findings produced by Blumler et al., (1978), who found that when asked to rate programs for their usefulness, PPBs and speeches by politicians were low on the list compared to those in which politicians were interviewed, took part in a discussion, or answered questions from the public.

Third, the net effect on the vote of PPBs, and therefore their importance in determining overall election outcomes, is relatively modest. In the 1979 and 1983 general elections both the Conservatives and Labour made a net loss of between 0.1 and 0.8 percent of the vote, despite the apparent sophistication of the Conservative campaigns in both elections (Bell, 1982; Delaney, 1982). In 1979 and 1983 only the Liberals and Alliance, respectively, made any gain in the vote; in the latter case the gain was over 3 percent of the vote. In sum, the electoral effects of the regulated system of political broadcasting in Britain are not large, but in situations of narrow margins between the parties, they could contribute to success or failure. The fact that the Liberals and Alliance can claim some success in gaining votes through political broadcasts probably says less about the quality of their broadcasts compared to the other parties than about the susceptibility of potential defectors from the Conservative and Labour parties to the influence of a media appeal.[4]

[4] It is argued that Liberal voters are the most likely to make up their minds in the latter stages of the campaign, and this has an interaction effect with political broadcasting (Crewe, 1981, 1985). This hypothesis was tested on the 1979 and 1983 data using interaction terms in the regression equation, but yielded no significant results.

Appendix: OLS and LOGIT Regression Results

	1979 Vote						*1983 Vote*					
	Con		*Lab*		*Lib*		*Con*		*Lab*		*All*	
	OLS	*LOG*	*OLS*	*LOG*	*OLS*	*LOG*	*OLS*	*LOG*	*OLS*	*LOG*	*OLS*	*LOG*
ConPPB	17*	14*	−4	−4	−8*	−6*	18*	15*	−12*	−10*	−3	−6*
LabPPB	−3	−5	15*	18*	−8*	−13*	−5	−9*	18*	13*	−6	−1
LiAllPPB	−19*	10*	−30*	−14*	67*	89*	−13*	−5*	−16*	−11*	42*	18*
Canvass	−1	3	4	3	0	−4	−5	−3	−7	0	−13*	1
Age	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gender	2	8*	−2*	−16*	2	7	1	9*	−3*	−7	−3*	−8*
Scot	−5*	−6*	4	8*	−3	3	−4	−3	5*	0	−1	4
Wales	−4*	−2	7*	2	−1	0	0	0	3	1	−1	0
HHWhiteC	4*	12*	−3*	−23*	2	11	6*	8*	−2*	−3	−1	0
Union	−4*	−7*	3*	6	3*	11*	−2	−2	3*	1	3*	3*
PtyId	73*	85*	71*	87*	40*	47*	70*	70*	63*	83*	57*	35*
Constant	9		7		2		6		5		13	
R-square	62		60		41		56		52		38	

* $p < .05$.

[a] Partial regression coefficients and logit coefficients predicting party vote; for a definition of variables, see Table 2. OLS coefficients have been multiplied by 100 to reflect percentage probabilities. Logit coefficients have been transformed to make them directly comparable with OLS partial coefficients, using the formula: $b_i\hat{Y}(1-\hat{Y})$, where b_i is the logit partial derivative for variable Y, and $\hat{Y}$ is the mean of the variable Y.

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An Anomaly in Political Perception

DONALD GRANBERG

PEOPLE are often asked in surveys to place a candidate or party on some scale (i.e., to estimate the candidate's or party's position on an issue like whether military spending ought to be decreased, held at the present level, or increased). In other instances, the scale used is a more abstract ideology scale (e.g., liberal-moderate-conservative). The nonevaluative placement judgment made in response to such a question can be regarded as a *political perception*, an outcome of the processes of *impression management* by the candidate or party and *impression formation* on the part of the citizen. This article describes two theories that have been used in prior analyses, a generalization regarding overall accuracy of perception, and an anomaly from the 1980 presidential election involving perception of Senator Edward Kennedy's position on abortion. Finally, an experiment is reported which confirms the most plausible explanation of the anomaly.

Two Theories of Political Perception

The *displacement theory* of political perception holds that people are motivated to avoid disagreement with a liked candidate and agreement

Abstract This article uses two theories of political perception, displacement theory and political cue theory, to analyze the abortion issue. Although both theories are supported, neither can account for the anomaly of collective misperception of Ted Kennedy's position. Experimentally manipulating the salience of politics and religion affected perception of Kennedy's position in a way that supported an extended version of political cue theory.

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with a disliked candidate. The expectation is that people engage in assimilation when attributing a position to a liked candidate, i.e., distort the candidate's position in the direction of their own attitude. When people who like the same candidate but hold different attitudes on an issue are compared, there tends to be a strong positive function between their own attitudinal position and the position attributed to the candidate on the same scale. Assuming the candidate's position to be constant, this positive function is supportive of the assimilation hypothesis.

Similarly, the same theory predicted that people would displace away from their own attitude, i.e., contrast, when attributing a position to a disliked candidate. A negative function between people's attitudes and their perceptions of a candidate's position, among people who dislike the candidate but who take different positions themselves on the issue, would be evidence of contrast (Granberg and Brent, 1974; Heider, 1958; Sherif and Hovland, 1961).

Relevant data pertaining to this theory have been analyzed in relation to several U.S. presidential elections, as well as parliamentary elections in Sweden. The tendency of people to assimilate when attributing a position to a preferred candidate or party has been robust. Contrast effects, however, have been weaker, but have occurred in relation to incumbent candidates (Berelson et al., 1954; Brent and Granberg, 1982; Granberg, 1983, 1985a; Kinder, 1978; King, 1978; Page and Brody, 1972; Shaffer, 1981; Sherrod, 1972). Although the tendency for assimilation of a preferred candidate to be stronger than contrast of a nonpreferred candidate was not anticipated, it has a close laboratory analog. In experiments, people find agreement with a liked other far more pleasant than disagreement with a disliked other, even though on logical grounds they are equally well balanced (Insko et al., 1974; Price et al., 1966).

Political cue theory asserts that people use relevant cues that are available in estimating a candidate's position on an issue. Thus, when people are asked to place a particular candidate on an issue and when they are uncertain, they will use other information which they know as a basis for drawing an inference. Cues that would normally be relevant would include the candidate's party affiliation and that party's perceived position, the candidate's general ideological reputation, and the candidate's position on other issues.

In recent election studies, people were asked to place the political parties, as well as the candidates, on several issue scales. Analyses have shown a strong positive correlation between where people place a party on an issue scale and where they place that party's nominee, thus supporting political cue theory. Moreover, when the person's perception of the party's position and the person's own attitude are used to jointly predict the person's perception of a preferred candidate, the party cue variable

appears to exert the stronger effect. The effect of the person's own attitude, the erstwhile assimilation or projection effect, is reduced substantially in such analyses, although still remaining statistically significant in most instances (Conover, 1981; Conover and Feldman, 1982; Feldman and Conover, 1983).

These two theories are not mutually exclusive. Displacement theory places more emphasis on internal motivational dynamics, while political cue theory is more of an information-processing model. Although both theories have received empirical support, neither offers a comprehensive view of political perception.

Overall Accuracy in Political Perception

Although it seems to have been largely unnoticed, evidence indicates the political perceptions by the public as a whole are generally quite accurate. Individuals may err, distort, or in many instances simply not know the positions of particular candidates on certain issues. But overall, such errors and distortions tend to cancel each other at the group level. When the perceptions of a sample of people are considered collectively, the correspondence between political perception and political reality is very close (Markus, 1982; Markus and Converse, 1979; Page, 1978; Granberg and Brent, 1980). Neither of the two theories described above has strong implications for the question of overall accuracy of political perception. Displacement effects could take place regardless of overall accuracy. That is, overall accuracy is neither precluded nor assured by the occurrence of displacement effects. If political cues provide valid information, then their use ought to lead to overall accuracy. It is also possible, however, that political cues could be misleading.

Perception on the Abortion Issue

In 1980, there occurred an exception to the general tendency toward collective accuracy, an exception so pronounced that it can be regarded as an anomaly. In the 1980 National Election Study conducted by the Center for Political Studies of the University of Michigan, a representative sample of 1614 U.S. adults were interviewed prior to the election. People were asked to give their attitude on abortion and their perception of the position of the candidates and the parties, as well as to estimate the current policy of the federal government. The overall results are shown in Table I.

By 1980, abortion had been legal on a national level, with very few and minor restrictions, for over seven years, but it was still highly controversial. In 1980, as in 1976, the Republican party had taken an antiabortion

Table 1. Attitudes and Perceptions on the Abortion Issue in 1980

	Alternative Positions on Abortion[a]							
	(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*N*	$\bar{x}$	*S.D.*	*% Don't Know*
Respondent's own position	37%	19%	33%	11%	1547	2.2	1.06	2.5
Placement of:								
Carter	25	27	36	12	907	2.3	0.99	41.0
Reagan	13	15	42	30	824	2.9	0.97	46.3
Kennedy	28	16	25	31	732	2.6	1.20	49.8
Anderson	43	24	22	11	474	2.0	1.05	68.2
Democratic Party	30	30	32	8	779	2.2	0.95	49.1
Republican Party	14	18	47	21	752	2.8	0.94	50.9
Federal government policy	58	22	17	3	1295	1.6	0.85	15.7

NOTE: The first four numbers in each row are row percentages indicating how many people answered with each of the alternatives 1, 2, 3, 4. People who said "don't know," "haven't thought much about it," or who gave some other uncodeable answer are excluded from all calculations in this article. The fifth number in each row gives the number of people who gave 1, 2, 3, or 4 as their answers, followed by the average, the standard deviation, and the percentage who said "don't know."

[a]Alternatives are as follows: (1) By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice. (2) The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established. (3) The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest or when the woman's life is in danger. (4) By law, abortion should never be permitted.

or prolife position in its party platform, while the Democratic party had taken a proabortion or prochoice position on abortion. Ronald Reagan, as the nominee of the Republican party in 1980, was staunchly antiabortion and was endorsed and supported by the National Right to Life Committee. Jimmy Carter took a prochoice position with regard to the legal status of abortion but departed from the position of the Democratic party by not supporting the use of federal funds to pay for the abortions of poor women. John Anderson, an Independent candidate, favored legal abortion as well as using federal funds to pay for abortions of indigent women, and thus he gained the support of the National Abortion Rights Action League. Ted Kennedy, Carter's opponent for the Democratic nomination in 1980, took the same prochoice position on abortion as Anderson. Kennedy has consistently voted prochoice in the U.S. Senate and was endorsed by NARAL's Political Action Committee (Granberg and Burlison, 1983; Traugott and Vinovskis, 1980).

Table 1 shows that, with the exception of Ted Kennedy, the thesis of collective accuracy in political perception is sustained in the data on abortion. The Democratic party is correctly perceived as more prochoice than the Republican party. Reagan is seen as more opposed to abortion than Carter, who, in turn, is seen as less favorable to abortion than Anderson. Carter was seen as slightly less favorable to abortion than the Democratic party, and Reagan was seen as slightly more opposed to abortion than the Republican party. On the 1–4 scale, the average perception of governmental policy was 1.4, certainly in the right direction although the most nearly correct answer would have been 1.0.

When it comes to Kennedy, however, the tendency toward collective accuracy breaks down. A majority of those indicating their perceptions attributed one of the two more antiabortion positions to Kennedy, clearly a collective error. People were at least as likely to attribute the extreme antiabortion position to Kennedy as they were to attribute that position to Reagan. Kennedy was seen as significantly more opposed to abortion than Carter, whereas, if anything, the opposite was true. Another feature of the perceptions of Kennedy's position on abortion was an unusually high level of variance. This could indicate that Kennedy was ambiguous on abortion, but there is no good reason to believe he was. It could also indicate that people were using different cues and reaching different conclusions.

Applying the Theories of Political Perception to the Abortion Issue

Before directly addressing the probable source of this anomaly, the abortion data are examined to see whether they fit the theories in the usual manner or whether there is something unusual about the issue. In Table 2 people are grouped into three categories, depending on their attitude toward the candidate or party as reflected in their ratings on a feeling thermometer. Within each group the correlation between the person's attitude and the perceived position of the candidate or party is calculated. A positive correlation indicates assimilation and a negative correlation indicates contrast. The results in Table 2 are fairly typical. People who have a favorable attitude tend to assimilate Kennedy, while those with a negative attitude toward Kennedy show a weaker tendency toward contrast. Overall, perceptions on abortion confirm displacement theory in a rather normal manner.

Applying political cue theory, the correlation between the position attributed to Kennedy and the position attributed to the Democratic party on abortion was +.45. Interestingly, this correlation increased to +.63 if Carter is substituted for Kennedy, in spite of Kennedy's position being more in harmony with the Democratic party on abortion than was

Table 2. Correlations Between Own Position on Abortion and Position Attributed to Four Candidates and Two Parties in 1980

Correlation between the person's attitude toward abortion and the position attributed to:	*Overall*	*Attitude Toward Political Candidate or Party*		
		Negative (0–40)	*Neutral (41–69)*	*Positive (70–100)*
Carter	.09*	−.21*	.01	.34*
Reagan	.01	−.25*	.08	.15*
Kennedy	.05	−.18*	.08	.36*
Anderson	.05	−.22*	−.05	.41*
Democratic Party	.11*	−.22*	−.07	.40*
Republican Party	−.04	−.09	−.14*	.15*

*$p < .01$

NOTE: The abortion question used to measure attitude and perception is in Table 1.

Carter's. The correlation between position attributed to Reagan and to the Republican party was +.64. These correlations are obviously significant and consistent with political cue theory.

Elsewhere in the survey, people were asked to place themselves and the candidates on a 1–7 liberal–conservative scale. Overall, Reagan was placed at an average position of 5.2, Carter at 3.7, Anderson at 3.6, and Kennedy at 2.6. People who rated Kennedy as more toward the liberal end of that scale did show some tendency to perceive him as more prochoice on abortion, the correlation being +.20. Of those who did not realize that Kennedy was a liberal, 71 percent attributed an antiabortion position to Kennedy, compared to 46 percent of those who did recognize that Kennedy was a liberal. Similarly, placing Carter on ideology correlated +.21 with perception of Carter on abortion, and placement of Reagan on ideology correlated +.23 with perception of Reagan on abortion. So it is plausible that people did use what they thought to be the candidate's general ideological stance as a cue to infer the candidate's position on abortion.

Table 3 examines perception of Kennedy on abortion as a function of the respondent's attitude on abortion, perceived position of the Democratic party on abortion, and perceived position of Kennedy on ideology. This analysis was done first for all those who answered the four relevant questions and then for the three attitude toward Kennedy groups. Overall, the strongest effect was that of the perceived position of the Democratic party, followed by the perceived ideological position of Kennedy,

and the effect of the respondent's own position on abortion was not significant. However, when attitude toward Kennedy was controlled, the relative weights of the predictor variables shifted dramatically. Among those who liked Kennedy, who rated him 70 or higher on the 0–100 degree feeling thermometer, the respondent's attitude exerted the dominant effect on perceived position of Kennedy on abortion.

Table 3. Regression Analysis of Perceptions of Kennedy's Position on Abortion (Dependent Variable: Perception of Kennedy's Position on Abortion)

	Independent Variables							
	Respondent's Own Attitude		*Perception of Democratic Party's Position on Abortion*		*Perception of Kennedy's Ideological Position*			
	r	*Beta*	*r*	*Beta*	*r*	*Beta*	*R*	*N*
Combined	.09	.07	.44	.39*	.26	.15*	.46	441
Attitude toward Kennedy								
Like Kennedy (70-100)	.50	.42*	.30	.14	.35	.22*	.57	123
Neutral toward Kennedy (41-69)	.18	.09	.38	.33*	.24	.15	.42	114
Dislike Kennedy (0-40)	-.16	-.08	.53	.50*	.20	.07	.54	204

*$p < .05$

NOTE: *r* indicates correlation coefficient, Beta the standardized regression coefficient, *R* the multiple regression coefficient, and *N* the number of people in each analysis.

Generally, the data suggest that although the perceptions on abortion contain an anomaly, they nonetheless fit the usual pattern of support for displacement and political cue theories. This is not satisfying, however, as it leaves the Kennedy anomaly unexplained. The most plausible explanation for attributing an antiabortion position to Kennedy is the use of another cue, namely, his religious affiliation. Many people, when asked their perception of Kennedy's position on abortion, may have reasoned roughly as follows: "I don't really know Kennedy's position on abortion, but I do know Kennedy is a Catholic; Catholics tend to oppose abortion and, therefore, it is reasonable to ascribe an antiabortion position to Kennedy." Others may have reasoned, "I may not know Kennedy's position on abortion with any certainty, but I do know Kennedy is a Liberal Democrat; Liberal Democrats tend to support legalized abortion and, therefore, it is reasonable to ascribe a prochoice position to Kennedy." People who knew that Kennedy was both Catholic and a Liberal

Democrat may have been affected by which quality was more salient or seemed more relevant at the time they indicated their perceptions. If people used different cues as a basis for drawing inferences, this could account for the large variance in the perception of Kennedy on abortion. This reasoning is an extension of political cue theory to include, on this issue, the use of a candidate's religion as a cue in inferring his position on abortion.

To demonstrate the validity of this interpretation, the potential of secondary analysis using the national survey is limited in that the most theoretically revealing questions were not asked. Nonetheless, the national survey data were analyzed further to examine certain possibilities that may have contributed to the erroneous perception of Kennedy's position on abortion.

Among Catholics in the sample, 44 percent attributed a prochoice position (1 or 2 in Table 1) to Kennedy, as did 44 percent of the non-Catholics. Also, Catholics (29 percent) were not more likely to attribute the extreme antiabortion position to Kennedy than non-Catholics (31 percent). Catholics who attended mass frequently were slightly more likely to attribute an antiabortion position to Kennedy (59 percent) than were Catholics who did not attend mass regularly (53 percent), but this difference was not significant.

Another possibility was that living in Massachusetts or a surrounding state in the New England region might provide a more adequate information base. People in Massachusetts were more likely than people in other states to attribute correctly a prochoice position to Kennedy (65 to 44 percent), but due to the small number of respondents in Massachusetts (23), this difference was not reliable. People in New England were more likely to attribute a prochoice position to Kennedy than people outside of New England (61 to 44 percent), and this difference was significant ($p < .01$).

Among other factors examined, age, education, and how well informed people were about politics generally, each exerted a significant independent effect on perceptions of Kennedy on abortion. Younger, more educated, better informed people were more likely to attribute a prochoice position to Kennedy. Of these, age was the strongest predictor. Among those 65 or older, 68 percent attributed an antiabortion position to Kennedy, compared to 40 percent of those 30 or younger. For younger people, Kennedy's political orientation was perhaps more salient, while for older people his link with the Catholic religion was perhaps more salient. This was about as far as we could go in secondary analysis of the national survey. Therefore, an experiment was done to directly test the interpretation developed thus far as to why this anomaly in political perception occurred.

An Experiment Manipulating the Salience of Cues

In April 1984, 180 undergraduate students participated in an experiment which dealt with "attitudes and perceptions pertaining to people important in the U.S. presidential elections of 1980 and 1984." All respondents were asked initially to give their attitudes toward eight politicians (Ronald Reagan, John Anderson, Jimmy Carter, George Bush, Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, Ted Kennedy, and Jesse Jackson). Then, by random assignment, they dealt with a series of questions designed to make either politics *or* religion salient. The effectiveness of the random assignment is evidenced by people in the two conditions not differing significantly on sex, year in school, party preference, political ideology, or their attitudes toward any of the politicians.

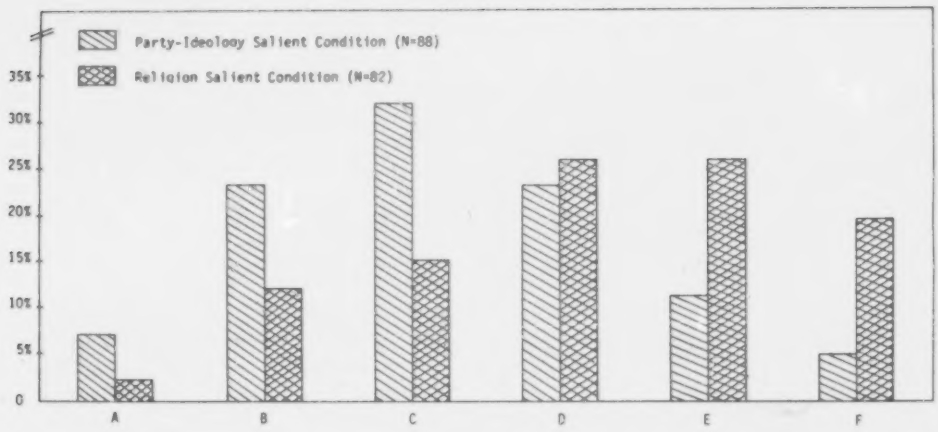
Politics was made salient by asking people two sets of question. First, they were asked if they happened to know whether each politician was a Liberal Democrat, Liberal Republican, Moderate Democrat, Moderate Republican, Conservative Democrat, or Conservative Republican. They were then asked how likely it was that a person with those six political orientations would support or oppose legalized abortion, and to use for their answers a 7-point scale ranging from "certainly would support legalized abortion" to "certainly would not support legalized abortion."

In the other condition, religion was made salient by asking two sets of analogous questions. First, they were asked if they knew the religious affiliation of each politician, and second, how likely it was that a person with each of eight religious affiliations would support legalized abortion.

Next came measurement of the dependent variable, perception of the positions of the politicians on abortion. These perceptions were measured using six alternatives, three variations in degree on a prochoice theme and three as variations on a prolife theme (Figure 1).

Our focus is on how people perceived Kennedy's position on abortion and whether this varied significantly as a function of whether religion or politics had been made salient. If the extreme prochoice alternative is coded 1 and the extreme prolife alternative 6, the average placement of Kennedy by people in the politics salient condition was 3.2, compared to 4.2 for the religion salient condition ($t = 4.76$, df = 168, $p < .001$, $r = .34$). The distribution of perceptions of Kennedy on abortion is shown in Figure 1. About 71 percent in the religion salient condition attributed an antiabortion position to Kennedy, compared to 38 percent in the politics salient condition.

The effectiveness of the manipulation depended upon people knowing that Kennedy was a Catholic or a Liberal Democrat. Subjects were somewhat more likely to know Kennedy was a Catholic (81 percent) than they were to know he was a Liberal Democrat (46 percent). Of course,



A. There should be *no legal restrictions whatsoever* on a woman's right to have an abortion if she chooses to do so and the *government should* even *encourage some women* to have an abortion.

B. There should be *essentially no restrictions* on a woman's right to have an abortion if she chooses to do so and the *government should do nothing to encourage or discourage* abortion.

C. There should be *few* if any *legal restrictions* on abortion but the government should *encourage* women to *choose other alternatives*, and to make sure a woman has thought her decision through carefully and is *thoroughly informed* as to what is actually involved in an abortion.

D. Abortion should be *illegal except* if the *woman's health* is seriously endangered by the pregnancy, if she became pregnant as a result of *rape* or *incest*, or if there is a strong chance of a *serious defect* in the baby.

E. Abortion should be *illegal except* if it is *necessary* to save the *woman's life*.

F. Abortion should be *illegal* under all *circumstances* and the laws against it *strictly enforced*.

Figure 1. Percentage Attributing Different Positions on Abortion to Edward Kennedy as a Function of Whether Religion or Political Orientation Had Been Made Salient

knowing the latter requires two bits of information, and if one breaks that down, 74 percent knew Kennedy was a Democrat and 53 percent knew him to be a Liberal. If we selected only those people from the religion salient condition who knew Kennedy was a Catholic and those from the politics salient condition who knew Kennedy was a Liberal Democrat, the observed difference was enhanced somewhat (averages were 3.0 and 4.4, $t = 5.43$, df = 106, $p < .001$, $r = .47$). Finally, when we analyzed only the perceptions of those people from the two conditions who (a) knew Kennedy was a Liberal Democrat and that Liberal Democrats are likely to support legalized abortion or (b) knew Kennedy was a Catholic and that Catholics are likely to oppose legalized abortion, the results were more pronounced (averages were 2.8 and 4.4, $t = 6.11$, df = 96, $p < .001$, $r = .53$). These results offer strong support for an extended

version of political cue theory. Randomly assigning people to a condition in which religion or politics was made salient as a cue had a significant effect on perception of Kennedy's position on abortion.

Discussion

Evidence from previous studies and this study supports the thesis that when people are uncertain, the answers they give to political perception questions can be influenced by available and apparently relevant cues. The high percentage of people who said they did not know the position of the candidates and parties on abortion (Table 1, right-hand column) implies that most people were probably not very well informed about this issue. In perception of Kennedy's position on abortion, his religion and political orientation would lead to different inferences. In his case, the religion cue was misleading and his political orientation, if used as a cue, led to a veridical perception. A recent analysis of the U.S. Senate suggests that both religion and political orientation have some validity as cues to infer a senator's position on abortion. Catholic senators were more likely than non-Catholic senators to vote against abortion (65 to 46 percent, $r = .14$), but the cues of party affiliation ($r = .31$) and political ideology ($r = .55$) provided a more reliable basis for predicting a senator's position on abortion (Granberg, 1985b).

A cue theory of political perception may be most relevant to people who are only mildly or moderately involved in the issue under consideration. Highly involved and committed activists are not content to use cues in a casual manner to estimate or infer the probable position of a public official. Rather, they insist on having precise information. A Catholic public official who votes prochoice on abortion (e.g., Ted Kennedy, Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, or vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro) constitutes a special *bête noire* for Catholic members of the prolife movement. In an interview with the author, a leader of the National Right to Life Committee stated in regard to Kennedy, "He's a Catholic and he ought to know better." Perhaps it is mainly to abortion activists and social scientists who have studied the abortion issue closely that the public's misperception of Kennedy's abortion position would seem especially anomalous.

Examination of the anomaly proved to be instructive in two respects. When the results of the saliency experiment are included, the anomaly is accounted for by an extension of a cue theory of political perception. On abortion, however, people apparently stray outside of the political realm in the selection of perceptual cues. Neither the political nor the religious cue was irrelevant, although the religious cue led to collective mispercep-

tion in the case of Kennedy. Even in the case of the anomaly, the perceptual data provided supportive evidence for displacement and political cue theories. Assimilation and contrast are processes that occur at the individual level. In addition to these displacement processes, many individuals use available and seemingly relevant cues to guide their perceptions of political figures. Given that these two theories are neither mutually exclusive nor complete, insights from both theories should be incorporated into a more comprehensive theory of political perception that also addresses the question of collective accuracy. That remains a task for subsequent studies.

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Evaluating Presidential Candidates: Who Focuses on Their Personal Attributes?

DAVID P. GLASS

IN EACH presidential campaign much attention is focused on the personal attributes of the candidates.[1] Even when the focus of a campaign appears to switch from personalities to issues, it is often what the issue reveals about "the man" rather than the issue itself which is in the spotlight. Thus, in 1976, when Gerald Ford blundered by saying Poland was free of Soviet domination, interest was aroused less because Ford's

[1] The fact that the candidates themselves played an important role in voting decisions was recognized long ago. Campbell et al. (1954), for example, divided the electorate into three groups: party voters, policy voters, and candidate voters. However, party and issue considerations received far more extensive scholarly attention. Beginning with Stokes's (1966) brilliant analysis, more attention was directed toward the candidates. Stokes showed that the emergence of a particularly attractive candidate, causing voters to swing to his party, or the rise of an especially unattractive candidate, driving fellow partisans away, largely explained shifting party fortunes. Subsequent studies (Kelley and Mirer, 1974; Popkin et al., 1976; Markus and Converse, 1979) have reconfirmed this finding.

Abstract This article shows that highly educated individuals are *more* concerned with personal attributes than less educated people. Moreover, both those at the high and low ends of the educational ladder express interest in trivial as well as important aspects of candidates' attributes. Finally, personal attributes have as large an impact on the vote of the best educated as on the vote of the least educated. These findings flatly contradict the standard assumptions about the terms in which educated individuals evaluate presidential candidates.

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statement implied a new reality or shift in policy than for what the statement was thought to imply about Ford's intelligence.[2] Similarly, Jimmy Carter's defense of his proposed amnesty for draft dodgers before the Veterans of Foreign Wars was a clear attempt to demonstrate firmness and courage.

The purpose of this article is to examine the public's perception of the presidential candidates' personal attributes.[3] While it is acknowledged that the candidates' personal qualities are an important short-term force in the voter's decision-making process, little research has been done on what kinds of people are concerned with which aspects of these personal qualities.[4] Two questions are tackled here. First, are more educated people as concerned with the personal qualities of the candidates as those who are less educated? In other words, are the candidates' personal qualities of more interest to certain sectors of the public than to others? Second, are certain kinds of personal attributes of more concern to the better educated than to the less educated? Quite contradictory answers to these two questions can be logically deduced from the present state of knowledge.

Discussion

The president's personal qualities may be an important factor in governing, but much of the literature suggests that these aspects of the two major candidates are most consequential to less attentive citizens (Campbell et al., 1960: chap. 10; Niemi and Weisberg, 1976:161-74; Nie et al., 1976: chap. 10). The roots of this assumption run back to notions of the

[2] Miller and Miller (1977) note that when those who had seen the debates were asked what they remembered about each candidate, most comments concerned candidate competence or performance and far fewer concerned issues. Similarly, Graber (1972) found that the public tends to extract information about the president's personal image from press coverage of the president.

[3] Presidential elections are, as Kinder and Abelson (1981) point out, regularly approached as: a contest between the major parties in which partisan identification plays a major role (Campbell et al., 1960); an ideological struggle over alternative policies (see, for example, David RePass, 1971; Gerald Pomper, 1972; Nie et al., 1976; Miller and Miller, 1976); or an assessment of past performance (Milller and Miller, 1977; Fiorina, 1981). This article in no way contests the legitimacy of these approaches, but emphasizes that the elections are also a selection between *people*.

[4] Many studies address the question of which specific attributes benefited or harmed specific candidates, or which attributes in general seem to be important in evaluating candidates. These include Campbell et al. (1960), Nimmo and Savage (1976), Miller and Miller (1977), Page (1978). Two studies take the subject a step further and look at different subgroups of the population. Kinder and Abelson (1981:20-22) examine the voting effect of specific attributes on respondents at different levels of sophistication. The study which comes closest to the approach adopted in this article is Shabad and Andersen (1979). Shabab and Andersen do an excellent job of destroying the myths about the differences between men and women in their candidate evaluations.

rational voter. The textbook ideal was an electorate which judged the candidates solely in terms of their positions on the issues. Research in the late 1950s and early 1960s pointed out how this ideal diverged from reality (Campbell et al., 1960). Party and candidate considerations clearly had a very large impact on the voter's decision-making process. However, it was still reasonable to expect that better educated individuals would come closest to fitting the ideal of the rational voter. While party, candidate, and issue factors were all involved in any individual's voting decision, it seemed likely that the educated voter would be less concerned with personal attributes than those with less education.[5]

While this assumption sounds plausible, there is little research to back it up. Moreover, one might speculate that the better educated are *more* concerned with candidate attributes than the poorly educated. One factor which would encourage the educated observers to focus on the candidates' personal attributes is the wide degree of leeway the candidates enjoy. Our governmental system is structured in such a way that the candidate is relatively free to change his policy positions. The president is not bound by his party's platform or his own preelection pledges. He is not committed to abide by the decisions of his fellow partisans in Congress. Often he will ignore his own pledges, claiming that the situation or his perspective on the problem has changed. Given this flexibility on issue positions, it is natural that the electorate and media take with a grain of salt pronouncements made in the heat of the campaign. Instead, they, and possibly educated observers as well, may scrutinize the candidate for that which is not likely to change, his personality. In addition, a president is inevitably going to be faced with unanticipated problems and decisions. One might surmise that only the better educated would realize the ephemeral nature of the issue positions taken by the candidate and accordingly give more weight to the personal attributes of the candidates. Thus, the argument can be made that it would be unwise for any citizen to evaluate the candidates solely in terms of their positions on the issues. It may well be that the more highly educated sector of the public shows a *greater* concern for the personal attributes of the presidential candidates, and justifiably so.

[5] This assumption is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in one of the earliest works to attack the ideal of the rational voter, *The American Voter* (Campbell et al., 1960). One of the authors' objectives was to measure the proportion of the electorate which examined the candidates and parties in ideological terms. To do this, they constructed four "levels of conceptualization." The lowest level consisted of those who evaluated the parties and candidates out of family tradition and focused "their political evaluation upon the personal characteristics of the current candidates themselves" (p.221). Nie et al. (1976) and Pierce and Hagner (1982) have the same assumption in their constructions of the levels of conceptualization. For a powerful critique of the measures of the levels of conceptualization, see Smith (1980).

The second question addressed in this paper is whether those with more education focus on different personal attributes than the less educated.[6] Again, two contradictory, and quite reasonable, deductions are possible. On the one hand, it seems likely that educated individuals are more concerned with what might be termed the more substantive aspects of the candidates' attributes: experience, leadership, and performance capabilities. It is expected that they are *not* concerned with the candidate's looks, his family background, his wife, his religion, and other irrelevant characteristics. On the other hand, the traits desirable in a leader are likely to be experienced by people in all walks of life, and the value placed upon them does not seem likely to be the result of formal education.

Methodology

All the data presented in this paper are from the National Election Studies (NES) of the University of Michigan Center for Political Studies. The independent variable in this study is, of course, the level of education of the respondents.

The dependent variable in the study is concern with *all* personal attributes of the candidates in the first and final sections of the findings and with selected attributes in the remaining sections. This measure was derived from the four open-ended questions which the NES has asked in each presidential campaign since 1952 about respondents' likes and dislikes concerning the two major party presidential candidates.[7] Only the first three responses coded in each year have been included in the crosstabulations. This was done to achieve comparability between 1972 (when the survey changed from recording five responses to recording three responses) and the other campaigns. The results were also checked using only the first response of each respondent, as well as all five responses in various years. No significant differences in the results were evident from coding one response or five responses as opposed to three responses.

[6] The varied nature of the comments which fall into the "personal attribute" category must be taken into account, and analysis at an aggregated level can proceed only so far. Specific attributes or subcategories of attributes provide better insight into the public's perception of the candidates. Miller and Levitin (1976) have emphasized the grab-bag quality of the characteristics lumped into the personal attributes category. Miller and Miller's (1977) use of factor analysis also revealed the need to disaggregate the responses.

[7] These questions are in the format: "Is there anything in particular about Mr. Carter that might make you want to vote for him? (What is that?)" "Is there anything in particular about Mr. Carter that might make you want to vote against him? (What is that?)." It should be noted that the percentage of respondents who had nothing to say to all four questions was very small.

The measure used to analyze the concern of those at different levels of education is the frequency these attributes are mentioned. The rationale, of course, is that respondents are expected to talk about what is of importance to them. The four most common categories of responses are personal attributes, policies, party connections, and interest group affiliations.[8] Presumably, those who talk mainly about policies are primarily concerned with the policy positions of the candidates, those who concentrate on the group affiliations are interested in group benefits, etc.

The measure employed in this article does not reflect differences in the articulateness of the groups examined. It is true, of course, that better educated respondents have more to say than those with less education. In 1980, for example, college educated respondents averaged 6.14 responses (out of a possible 12 responses) per respondent while those with an eighth-grade education or less averaged 3.03 responses. However, I examine the *percentage* of *all responses* of those at different levels of education which concern the personal attributes of the candidates. If the better educated devote a greater percentage of their responses than the less educated to one category of responses (for example, policy references), then they *must* direct a smaller percentage to some other category. This measure captures what people talk about when they talk, not how much they have to say. Presumably, if those at different levels of education place the same weight on various dimensions (i.e., policies, personal attributes, groups, party) in evaluating the candidates, then a similar proportion of all their responses will concern these dimensions. Thus, the frequency with which attributes are mentioned by respondents is a valid measure of their concern for these attributes.

An alternative way to analyze these data is to count respondents rather than responses—i.e., to count the proportion of the sample who *mention* (remark upon something at least once) the attributes or response category one is interested in. The problem with this measure for the purposes of this article is that better educated respondents talk more and are thus more likely to *mention* anything than less educated respondents. In all the tables which follow, a substantially greater percentage of the better educated respondents *mentioned* the attributes examined.

One other problem involves categorizing the responses. In other words, which responses should be considered "personal attributes"? The NES codebooks provide standard categories for the responses which have generally been adopted in the literature, i.e., categories of "personal," "policy," "groups," and "party" responses. This article also adopts this coding procedure (for exact codings, see Appendix). The

[8] The term *policies* is used here in place of *issues* to avoid any conceptual confusion. Personal attributes are often legitimate issues in a campaign, as are policy positions.

"personal attribute" coding employed here is virtually identical to that used by Shabad and Andersen (1979) in their discussion of candidate evaluations by men and women.

In the final section of this article, the effect of individuals' evaluations of the candidates' personal attributes on their vote is measured using an OLS regression.[9] For each individual a net propensity for the Democratic or Republican candidate was calculated in terms of responses concerning personal attributes, policies, and all other responses.[10] These are the most proximate causes of any individual's vote. Behind an individual's assessment of the candidates' personal attributes, policy positions, etc. lies his party identification. Using this very simple model of voting, I tested to see if the manner in which individuals *spoke* about the candidates carried over into the way they *acted* when they voted.

Findings

WHO FOCUSES ON PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES?

Are less educated Americans more interested in the personal attributes of presidential candidates than those with more schooling? Table 1 provides a clear answer. The fact is that the educated exhibit *greater* concern for the candidates' attributes than those with less education.

Between 1952 and 1984, an average of 55 percent of the responses of those who had a college degree dealt with personal attributes. Over this same period, only 42 percent of the responses of those with less than a

[9] The use of OLS regression to make predictions about the effect of my independent variables (personal attribute, policy, and "other" responses) on a dichotomous dependent variable (vote for the Democratic or Republican candidate) is technically incorrect. A probit analysis is often chosen by researchers when dealing with dichotomous dependent variables since it produces efficient estimated probabilities which are bounded between 0 and 1. However, my experience in side-by-side comparisons of the results with OLS and probit show few differences. Hanushek and Jackson (1979) show that in the moderate ranges of probability—.20 to .80 — OLS estimates are quite similar to probit. The major differences come in the extreme ranges.

[10] The method used to assign a score to each individual on these responses is that used by Kelley and Mirer (1974). For each individual the number of unfavorable responses toward the Democratic candidate (Dneg) was subtracted from the number of favorable responses (Dpos) to arrive at a net score (Dpos−Dneg). The same procedure was used to arrive at a net score for the Republican candidate. It was possible to compute an overall score for each individual [(Dpos−Dneg)−(Rpos−Rneg)] in which a positive score predicts support for the Democratic candidate and a negative score predicts support for the Republican candidate. All possible responses in each year (i.e., five in every year except 1972) were used. This was done for each of the three categories of responses (i.e., those concerning personal attributes, those concerning policies, and all other responses). For party identification, each respondent was given one of three values: 1 (strong, weak, and "leaning" Democrats), 0 ("pure" independents), −1 (strong, weak, "leaning" Republicans). On the vote, a respondent who reported voting for the Republican candidate was coded as 0 while those reporting a vote for the Democrat were coded as 1.

Table 1. Percentages of Personal Attribute References in Candidate Evaluations, by Education, 1952–1984

	1952	*1956*	*1960*	*1964*	*1968*	*1972*	*1976*	*1980*	*1984*	*Mean*
College degree or higher	68	71	73	55	55	39	60	43	28	55
Some college	61	68	64	46	52	33	57	39	27	50
High school	62	61	58	43	48	34	52	40	25	47
8th grade or less	57	49	58	34	40	32	46	41	25	42
Total	61	60	61	44	48	35	54	41	26	48

NOTE: A difference of proportions test between the highest and lowest educational categories revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in each election year, except 1980 and 1984.

SOURCE: 1952 through 1984 National Election Study, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

ninth-grade education focused on the same topic. The relationship between education and concern with personal attributes is consistent throughout the years examined—i.e., those with more education are more concerned with personal attributes. The only exceptions are minor ones. For example, in 1952, 1972, and 1980, those with a high-school education devoted a single percentage point more of their responses to candidate attributes than those with some college experience. The myth that the better educated are less concerned with the personal attributes of presidential candidates than the less educated is simply that—a myth.

This finding should not be taken to imply that since the highly educated show more concern about personal attributes that they show significantly less concern about policies. Table 2 reveals what respondents at different levels of education have been concerned with across the nine elections from 1952 to 1984. One striking fact is that respondents at all educational levels have similar degrees of concern with the candidate's policies (as well as with their party connections). Groups do not attract much of anyone's attention. Even among people who have not gone beyond elementary school, only 9 percent of their remarks concern the candidates' group affiliations. Virtually none of the responses of the better educated mainstream concerned groups. The largest difference is clearly in concern for personal attributes.

Table 2, does not, of course, reveal the variations between elections and across the nearly three decades covered. However, the tendencies shown in this summary table are typical of the relationships in the individual years. There has been a trend since 1964 toward a greater percentage of responses being directed toward policies with fewer responses focusing on personal attributes (the total line on Table 1 shows the percentage of all responses on personal attributes in each election). That trend, how-

Table 2. Mean Percentages of Personal Attribute, Policy, Group, and Miscellaneous References in Candidate Evaluations by Education, 1952–1984

	Personal Attributes	*Policies*	*Party*	*Groups*	*Other*	*Total*
College degree or higher	55	26	9	3	8	101[a]
Some college	50	28	9	4	10	101[a]
High school	47	27	9	6	10	99[a]
8th grade or less	42	25	11	9	12	99[a]
Total	48	27	9	5	10	99[a]

[a] Does not equal 100% because of rounding.

NOTE: A difference of proportions test between the highest and lowest educational categories revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in each election year for each category of responses except: Personal attributes: 1980, 1984
Policies: 1952, 1960, 1964, 1972, 1976
Party: 1956, 1972, 1980, 1984
Groups: all years reveal significant differences
Other: 1952, 1972, 1980

SOURCE: 1952 through 1984 National Election Study, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

ever, has not been constant, with the 1976 election resembling the elections of the 1950s.

WHICH PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES GARNER ATTENTION?

It is obvious that the attributes with which a candidate is endowed are not equally relevant to his qualification as a potential president. Certainly, it is assumed that the color of a candidate's hair or eyes, his religion, his smile are not important to his ability to fill the role of president. The important attributes of the candidate are his competence, his leadership capacity, his integrity, etc. These are the attributes which affect performance, and therefore one might expect better educated individuals to care more about them, leaving the superficial things for the more inattentive members of the public.

To test this assumption that better educated voters focus on the job-related characteristics, candidate attributes were divided into three categories: those concerning competence, those dealing with the candidates' character, and references to the candidates' personal attraction (see Appendix for coding).[11] The "competence" category includes refer-

[11] These categories were originally established in the National Election Study (NES) of the 1952 election. I have used different labels for these categories to allow the reader to more easiiy grasp their contents. My "competence" category is equivalent to the NES category of "experience and ability." Shabad and Andersen (1979) also used the term *competence* to describe these responses. My "character" category is equivalent to the NES

ences to whether the candidate is experienced enough to handle the presidency and to his ability to govern—i.e., "dependable/undependable," "well qualified/unqualified for the job," "experienced/inexperienced," "a successful/unsuccessful record."[12] "Character" responses encompass remarks such as the candidate is "a leader/not a leader," "a strong/weak man," "educated/uneducated," "honest/dishonest," "religious/irreligious." Finally, remarks on "personal attraction" concern how the candidate looks, his smile, whether he has a nice personality, how well known he is, the region of the country he comes from—his "warmth/coolness," "humor/humorlessness," and "pleasantness/unpleasantness" fall in this category. In short, the "personal attraction" category is composed of more superficial remarks. The obvious expectation is that better educated respondents will tend not to evaluate the candidates in terms of their "personal attraction."

Between 1952 and 1984, the American public has usually expressed greater interest in the candidates' characters and competence than in their personal attraction (Table 3). Fifty percent of all comments on personal attributes have concerned character, and 33 percent have focused on the candidates' competence. Only 17 percent of the comments have concerned personal attraction. However, the educated sectors of the public have shown *no* tendency to ignore the personal attraction attributes of the candidates as compared to the less educated sectors. Over this 28-year period, the college educated directed nearly the same percentage of their responses to the candidates' personal attraction as those in the three lower education categories.

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category of "character and background." "Personal attraction" is a category label used by the NES. In 1972 NES revised the categories. These new categories were not used in this article. Instead, the old coding was maintained for the 1972 through 1984 elections as I felt the original "personal attraction" category contained the majority of superficial responses in evaluating the candidates. The exact codings used are contained in the Appendix.

[12] Some of the responses in the "competence" category could be considered "policy" responses rather than "personal attribute" responses. For example, responses concerning the candidate's "military/war record" or "his record in public service" might seem to be "policy" responses. None of these responses, however, include any reference to any *specific* aspect of the candidate's record or experience so that they could alternatively be considered a response on the candidate's general competence, which I would consider a personal attribute. Miller and Miller (1977) have also noted the mixed nature of these responses, stressing that they are closely related to performance evaluations which individuals can use for retrospective voting. However, classifying all such responses as "policies" did not alter the finding that better educated respondents devoted a greater percentage of their responses to "personal attributes." Even if one considered *all* competence responses to be policy responses (although some responses are clearly personal attributes — i.e., "good/bad man," "dependable/undependable"), better educated respondents are still more concerned with the character and personal attraction responses. In short, no matter how one cuts the pie the basic finding holds up.

Table 3. Mean Percentage of Personal Attribute References Concerning Competence, Character, and Personal Attraction by Education, 1952–1984

	Competence	*Character*	*Personal Attraction*	*Personal Attributes*
College degree or higher	27	57	17	101[a]
Some college	31	52	17	100
High school	33	49	18	100
8th grade or less	39	44	17	100
Total	33	50	17	100

[a] Does not equal 100% because of rounding.

NOTE: A difference of proportions test between the highest and the lowest educational categories revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) in each election year for each category of responses except: Competence: 1976
Character: 1960
Personal Attraction: 1952, 1956, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1984

SOURCE: 1952 through 1984 National Election Study, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

This evidence certainly cannot be interpreted to show that those with more education have a *less* sophisticated basis of evaluation than those with relatively little formal education. The bulk of the responses of the better educated, after all, concern the more weighty matters of candidates' competence and character. Unexpectedly, the difference in the focus on personal attributes between those at different levels of education emerges not in the personal attraction category but between the two remaining categories. All four education groups focus more on character than on competence, but the gap between the two narrows in a regular fashion as education decreases. Perhaps the better educated are not as impressed by candidates' claims of "experience" and tend to focus more on the candidates' perceived character. However, the important point is that there is no evidence that the personal attraction of candidates is of more concern to those with less education. Apparently, the better educated use fairly superficial personal attraction attributes to evaluate the candidates to the same degree as the less educated.

The broad categories of responses (competence, character, and personal attraction) reported above are, of course, not the only way the personal attributes of the candidates can be broken down. The aggregated nature of these results (from nine elections), moreover, makes it difficult to relate them to individual candidate personalities. It seems worthwhile, then, to test these findings more closely in the context of specific comments in a single election.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES IN THE 1980 CAMPAIGN

Whatever other advantages one of the candidates held over the other in the 1980 campaign, it is difficult to perceive any advantage in terms of beauty. Ronald Reagan's features have undergone the natural transformations of time, and the famous Carter smile had certainly begun to wear thin by 1980. Despite their superficiality, some respondents brought up such topics. Not only were the candidates' appearance, looks, face, and smile food for thought for some respondents, but the gender of the candidates, patriotism, and the region the candidates came from were mused upon by others. Perhaps it is at this level that those with different levels of education separate out in the manner traditionally assumed. Who were the respondents that brought up such obviously trivial reasons for liking or disliking the candidates? Column one in Table 4 provides an answer.

Table 4. Percentages of Superficial, Competence, Leadership, Trust, Reliability References in Candidate Evaluations by Education, 1980[a]

	Superficial	*Competence*	*Leadership*	*Trust*	*Reliability*
College degree or higher (1916)	2	11	6	5	5
Some college (1781)	2	11	5	4	3
High school (3509)	3	12	4	5	3
8th grade or less (607)	2	12	2	5	2
Total (7813)	2	11	4	5	3

[a] In this table all five responses to each of the candidate questions were used. The coding for each type of reference is provided in Part II of the Appendix.

NOTE: A difference of proportions test between the highest and lowest educational categories revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) only for Leadership and Reliability.

SOURCE: 1980 National Election Study, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

Once again, the better educated were just as concerned with these attributes as the less educated. More important, no one devoted much attention to these topics. This finding held for similar comments in earlier elections as well. The realm of the trivial is clearly not inhabited only by the less educated.

Table 4 also examines the opposite side of the coin. The competence, leadership, trust, and reliability of the candidates are all topics of importance. The better educated did not seize on these more substantive

matters in the 1980 election in any way that sets them definitively apart from the less educated. To the dimensions of competence and trust, those at different levels of education devote almost exactly the same proportion of their responses. On leadership and reliability there are some small but not impressive differences. In short, the educationally advantaged seem to have evaluated Carter and Reagan in remarkably similar terms.

A final possibility is that better educated respondents might focus on attributes which are not only important to how the candidate will perform his functions as president, but about which there exists some controversy. In other words, if there is some perception that a candidate has an important flaw, the better educated individual may be more likely to pick up on that alleged flaw, and evaluate the candidate in terms of it. To test this hypothesis, two traits of the 1980 candidates were examined: Reagan's age and Carter's alleged weakness/indecisiveness. Both these attributes were widely discussed in the media during the campaign. In the NES survey, age was the most common response given as a factor in voting against Reagan. Indecisiveness/weakness was the second most commonly mentioned response for voting against Carter (with his handling of the Iranian hostage crisis occupying the first spot.) Were those attributes of more interest to better educated individuals?

The evidence provides no clear answer (Table 5). There is some tendency for those with an eighth-grade education or less to ignore the strength/weakness debate about Carter compared to those with more education. On the other hand, Reagan's age attracts the same percentage

Table 5. Percentage of References to Carter's Strength/Weakness and to Reagan's Age by Education, 1980[a]

	% References to Carter's Strength/Weakness, Decisiveness/Indecisiveness	*% References to Reagan's Age*
College degree or higher	5 (53/979)	6 (54/937)
Some college	5 (48/925)	5 (47/856)
High school	4 (70/1942)	6 (90/1567)
8th grade or less	2 (6/351)	6 (15/256)
Total	4 (177/4197)	6 (206/3616)

[a] In this table all five responses to each of the candidate questions were used. The coding for each type of references is provided in Part II of the Appendix. The base is total references to Carter in column one and total references to Reagan in column two.

NOTE: A difference of proportions test between the highest and lowest educational categories revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) for the references to Carter's Strength/Weakness, Decisiveness/Indecisiveness.

SOURCE: 1980 National Election Study, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

of responses from respondents at all educational levels. The better educated do not focus more on controversial attributes in any consistent manner than the less educated.

THE EFFECT OF PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES ON THE VOTE

While there is considerable evidence that the more and less educated *speak* in fairly similar terms with regard to the candidates' personal attributes, it is still possible that the effect of these evaluations on their

Table 6. Predicting Presidential Vote, 1952–1984

	1952	*1956*	*1960*	*1964*	*1972*	*1976*	*1984*
College degree or higher							
Personal attrib.	.044	.048	.025	.057	.074	.052	.038
	(.013)	(.010)	(.010)	(.010)	(.017)	(.009)	(.007)
Policies	.090	.036*	.058	.083	.091	.060	.042
	(.028)	(.023)	(.030)	(.014)	(.016)	(.013)	(.006)
Other	.111	.082	.098	.119	.091	.061	.045
	(.030)	(.024)	(.026)	(.023)	(.022)	(.011)	(.006)
Party ID	.173	.213	.263	.098	.126	.233	.251
	(.036)	(.033)	(.035)	(.030)	(.036)	(.024)	(.020)
n	95	123	100	141	150	261	316
8th grade							
Personal attrib.	.047	.049	.075	.056	.105	.060	.085
	(.009)	(.010)	(.011)	(.014)	(.026)	(.015)	(.027)
Policies	.078	.051	.037*	.022*	.075	.057	.039*
	(.019)	(.018)	(.023)	(.013)	(.022)	(.025)	(.021)
Other	.091	.072	.031*	.067	.105	.058	.089
	(.016)	(.015)	(.020)	(.014)	(.027)	(.017)	(.020)
Party ID	.199	.224	.193	.204	.086	.237	.156
	(.022)	(.024)	(.030)	(.024)	(.040)	(.031)	(.049)
n	399	316	230	230	127	175	101
Total							
Personal attrib.	.045	.047	.061	.052	.099	.061	.044
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.008)	(.004)	(.005)
Policies	.073	.055	.059	.055	.074	.056	.046
	(.009)	(.008)	(.009)	(.005)	(.007)	(.007)	(.004)
Other	.090	.078	.059	.086	.103	.070	.060
	(.008)	(.008)	(.010)	(.007)	(.009)	(.006)	(.004)
Party ID	.200	.214	.206	.168	.096	.207	.193
	(.012)	(.012)	(.014)	(.011)	(.014)	(.011)	(.011)
n	1165	1254	880	1102	821	1315	1365

*$p > .05$

NOTE: Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients. For all coefficients except those with *, $p < .05$. Entries in parentheses are standard errors.

SOURCE: 1952 through 1984 National Election Study, Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan.

actions is quite different. In other words, the more educated may not put so much weight on these evaluations of personal attributes as the less educated when it comes time to vote. To test this proposition, the effect of these responses on the vote was analyzed using OLS regression. Each presidential election since 1952 was examined, with the exception of 1968 and 1980, when important third-party candidates entered the contests. Only the more interesting comparison between those with a college degree and those with less than a ninth-grade education is reported.

Several interesting facts emerge from the results presented in Table 6. First, it is apparent from the totals at the bottom of the table that personal attributes have played a more important role than policies in two (1972 and 1976) of the seven elections examined. These coefficients are directly comparable since the unit of measurement of each is the same (see footnote 10). Moreover in three other elections (1960, 1964, and 1984) personal attributes had nearly the same effect as policies. In short, looking at all voters, personal attributes had as large or a larger impact than policies on their vote in five out of seven elections.

Second, it might have been imagined that the effect of attitudes towards personal attributes would have lost significance in the voting decisions of those with college degrees once other factors were controlled. This is not the case. In 1984, for example, each response favorable toward Mondale's personal attributes increased the likelihood of a college educated individual voting for Mondale by 3.8 percentage points. In each election year, these attitudes of the college educated toward personal attributes had a statistically significant effect on the vote.

Third, in most of the elections (four of the seven) attitudes on personal attributes have an equal effect on the vote of those with college degrees and of those with an eighth-grade education. In only one year (1964) is the coefficient actually *larger* for those with a college degree (.057) than for those who did not attend high school (.056). However, given the standard errors, there is no significant difference between the two groups in 1952, 1956, 1964, and 1976. Both the highest and least educated include personal attributes in their voting decision.

Finally, there is an interesting contrast in the relative importance of issues to personal attributes for those with college degrees as opposed to those in the lowest educational category. In five of the seven years (1952, 1960, 1964, 1972, 1976), policies were more important than personal attributes for the better educated, while in four of the seven years (1960, 1964, 1972, 1984) the opposite was true for the worse educated. This conforms with standard expectations of the relative importance of policies for these two groups. At the same time, the findings about concern for personal attributes between the two groups contradict conventional beliefs.

Conclusion

There are two interpretations that can be placed on this finding that the better educated are quite concerned with personal attributes—an optimistic and a pessimistic interpretation. The optimistic explanation is one presented earlier in the article. It may be that many of the better educated, recognizing the nature of the presidential campaign, view policy pronouncements with skepticism and accordingly place more weight on the candidates' personal attributes. This concern with personal attributes is not simply the path of individuals unable or unwilling to deal with issues, but the rational response of intelligent political observers to a political system in which policy positions are often cloudy and candidate attributes are far more concrete. The better educated may focus on personal attributes because they feel that this is a subject on which they can obtain more accurate and meaningful information about the candidates.

A pessimistic interpretation of the finding is also possible. The pessimistic explanation is rooted in the basic insight that most people know little about and have little interest in politics. From this perspective, the finding that the college educated pay as much if not more attention to candidates' personal attributes is not so surprising. Even the college educated are limited in their political knowledge, and the result may be that they are not all that different from the less educated in their approach in evaluating the candidates. This would suggest that only the exceptionally educated or informed—perhaps political science professors and politicians themselves—might approach the behavior assumed in the rational voter model. Perhaps the broad categories of education employed to compare respondents in this article are not fine enough to capture differences because there *are* few differences among the vast bulk of the population.

Yet this is overstating the dark side of the equation. It is clear that many personal attributes are serious matters which should be discussed and evaluated in the course of the campaign. Moreover, the vast majority of responses, even of the less educated, concern candidate competence and character—important subjects for evaluation. Only 17 percent of all personal attribute responses concerned the more superficial area of personal attraction, which translates into only 8 percent of *all* responses about the candidates. The point is that no one, not even the less educated, evaluates the candidates largely in terms of their smiles. If the behavior of the better educated does not match up with our high expectations, the less educated do not perform quite so poorly as one might have assumed.

Whichever interpretation one prefers, the fact remains that personal

attributes occupy a central position in the evaluative process of better educated individuals. Why has this point been missed? It is largely due to the strong influence of the rational voter model—a conception which quite clearly continues to exert a strong guiding force despite its apparent weaknesses. Our preconceptions of what is "rational" and what behavior one "should" expect have often blinded us. A good example of this is the construction of the "levels of conceptualization" with which various scholars have tried to measure the proportion of the electorate examining the candidates and parties in ideological terms. In some formulations of the levels, respondents rise up to the higher levels on the basis of one or two mentions of a single response (i.e., ideologues need to mention the word "conservative" and/or "liberal"). The bulk of the individual's responses are ignored. There is clearly a problem of losing the forest for the trees in such a construct, and the assumption that personal attributes are of more concern to the less educated is wrong.

The findings here, then, correct a long-standing incorrect assumption. Better educated individuals do not relegate personal attributes to the back burners in evaluating presidential candidates. Instead, these attributes are every bit as central to the evaluations of the highly educated as to the less educated.

Appendix

PART I

The following outline gives the actual numerical categories from the NES master codes included under the types of responses presented in Tables 1, 2, 3, and 6. Both positive and negative mentions were used in all years.

I. Personal attribute mentions
  A. 1952-1968: codes 010–391
    1. Competence mentions: codes 010–091
    2. Character mentions: codes 100–296
    3. Personal attraction mentions: codes 300–391
  B. 1972-1984: codes 0201–0498
    1. Competence mentions: codes 0201–0297
    2. Character mentions: codes 0301–0397, 0401–0432, 0445–0446
    3. Personal attraction mentions: codes 0433–0444, 0447–0498
II. Policy mentions
  A. 1952-1968: codes 400–699
  B. 1972-1984: codes 0900–1197
III. Group mentions
  A. 1952-1968: codes 701–794
  B. 1972-1984: codes 1201–1297
IV. Party mentions
  A. 1952-1968: codes 800–896
  B. 1972-1984: codes 0500–0597
V. Missing data codes (not counted)
  A. 1952: codes 991, 995, 998, 999
  B. 1956-1960: codes 992

C. 1964: codes 992–997
D. 1968: codes 000, 995–999
E. 1972-1984: codes 0000, 9996–9999
VI. Other mentions
A. 1952-1984: all codes not listed above.

PART II

The following outline gives the actual numerical categories from the 1980 NES master codes included under the types of responses presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

I. Superficial mentions: codes 411, 412, 427-430, 443–444, 446, 449, 455, 457, 461, 462
II. Competence mentions: codes 211, 212, 215–223, 309–312, 413, 414
III. Leadership mentions: codes 303–308
IV. Trust mentions: codes 401–404
V. Reliability mentions: codes 213, 214, 319, 320, 407, 408, 415–418, 431, 432, 459, 460
VI. Strength/weakness of Carter mentions: codes 303, 304
VII. Age of Reagan mentions: code 451.

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The Measurement of Values in Surveys: A Comparison of Ratings and Rankings

DUANE F. ALWIN AND JON A. KROSNICK

TO MANY social psychologists the concept of values is crucial to the understanding of human behavior. Values are generally defined as standards of desirability invoked in social interaction to evaluate the preferability of behavioral goals or modes of action (Williams, 1968). According to this perspective, values are assumed to be central to the cognitive organization of the individual and to serve as a basis for the formation of attitudes, beliefs, and opinions (see Rokeach, 1970).

Survey researchers have generally measured values using standardized techniques of ordering (or ranking) a set of competing alternatives provided by the investigator. Other methods have been used, but rankings have been the method of choice most frequently. However, rankings

Abstract Social values are most commonly measured using ranking techniques, but there is a scarcity of systematic comparisons between rankings and other approaches to measuring values in survey research. On the basis of data from the 1980 General Social Survey, this article evaluates the comparability of results obtained using rankings and ratings of valued qualities. The comparison focuses on (1) the ordering of aggregate value preferences and (2) the measurement of individual differences in latent value preferences. The two methods are judged to be similar with respect to ordering the aggregate preferences of the sample, but dissimilar with regard to the latent variable structure underlying the measures.

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have a number of problems tied to their degree of difficulty, and some have suggested that other techniques, such as ratings, could serve as effective alternatives. In this article, we compare the rating and ranking approaches to measuring values using data on parental orientations toward children from a randomized split-ballot experiment carried out in the 1980 General Social Survey. Before reporting our findings, we place the work in context by reviewing the literature that has discussed the relative advantages and disadvantages of rating and ranking techniques for measuring values.

The Measurement of Values: Ratings vs. Rankings

Value researchers have consistently argued on theoretical grounds that ranking techniques provide the most appropriate conceptual mapping to conceptions of values. For example, Rokeach (1973:6) points out that values are often thought to be inherently comparative and competitive, and thus the "choice" nature of the ranking task fits nicely with this conceptualization. Also, Kohn (1977:19) observes that the ranking approach to measuring values is demanded by their very nature, in that "a central manifestation of value is to be found in *choice*." This point of view is validated to some extent by the sheer prevalence of the use of rankings to measure values (e.g., Allport et al., 1960; Kluckholn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Lenski, 1961; Bengston, 1975).

Despite these arguments regarding the conceptual mapping of ranking techniques to the concept of values, this approach has a number of significant practical drawbacks when used in survey research. First, rankings are often difficult and taxing for respondents, demanding considerable cognitive sophistication and concentration. This is particularly problematic when the list of concepts to be ranked is lengthy (Rokeach, 1973:28; Feather, 1973:228). Second, the use of ranking techniques is time-consuming and may therefore be more expensive to administer (Munson and McIntyre, 1979:49). Third, since rankings often require the use of visual aids, or "show-cards," it is difficult to gather such information using telephone methods of data collection (Groves and Kahn, 1979:122-33). And finally, the sum of the ranks for any individual respondent equals a constant, so there is a linear dependency among the set of ranked items (Clemans, 1966; Jackson and Alwin, 1980). Consequently, it may not always be possible to employ conventional statistical techniques in the analysis of the latent content of ranked preference data.

In contrast to rankings, rating scales are easy to present to respondents. Munson and McIntyre (1979:49) estimate that ranking tasks take three times longer than similar rating tasks and involve a considerable decrease in respondent burden. Also, ratings can readily be administered over the

telephone and do not involve the linear dependency problem inherent in rankings. So ratings have none of the major disadvantages of rankings and might therefore be a good substitute for survey measurements of values.

However, ratings have two potential drawbacks which should be evaluated before they are employed. First, since ratings require less effort, the quality of data may be reduced relative to rankings. And as Feather (1973:229) points out, making the task easier may also reduce respondents' willingness to make more precise distinctions about the relative importance of valued qualities. Thus, although easier to administer and perform, ratings may compromise the level of precision of the data.

A second potential drawback of ratings is their susceptibility to problems of response style or response sets (Berg, 1966; Block, 1965; Phillips, 1973). When the rated qualities are all considered good or socially desirable, ratings tend to fall within a rather restricted range of the available scale points (Feather, 1973). The particular center or anchor-point of an individual's ratings may be due to extremity response style (Hamilton, 1968), individual interpretations of the meaning of judgment categories (Cronback, 1946, 1950; Messick, 1968), or group response sets (Cunningham et al., 1977). Variation across persons in such response tendencies may lead to correlated response patterns, or what Costner (1969) referred to as differential bias, producing spuriously positive correlations among ratings due to the common method of measurement (see also Alwin, 1974; Andrews, 1984). These positive correlations may complicate the analysis of the latent structure of value preferences.

EMPIRICAL COMPARISONS OF RATINGS AND RANKINGS

The major research comparing ratings and rankings as measures of values has focused on Rokeach's rankings of "instrumental" (modes of behavior) and "terminal" (end-states of existence) values using his *Value Survey* (Rokeach, 1967) and rating techniques adapted from it. This research has shown the following: (1) the aggregate or average preference orders measured by ratings and rankings have generally been found to be quite similar (Feather, 1973, 1975; Moore, 1975); (2) individual-level preference orders tend to be much less similar across ratings and rankings (Moore, 1975; Rankin and Grube, 1980), primarily because in using ratings respondents can score valued qualities equally; (3) over-time relationships among identical measures are slightly higher for rankings than for ratings, although the differences tend to be small (Munson and McIntyre, 1979; Rankin and Grube, 1980; Reynolds and Jolly, 1980); and (4) the predictive validity of ratings is somewhat higher than that of rankings (Rankin and Grube, 1980).

This research suggests that rating and ranking techniques may be inter-

changeable for the purpose of measuring aggregate preference orderings. However, there are other purposes for which researchers may wish to assess the value-preferences of respondents in surveys, and the validity of various measurement approaches depends on the extent to which these objectives are accomplished.

Another important purpose for measuring values is to study their latent content as reflected in their covariance or correlational structure (e.g. Kohn, 1969; Rokeach, 1973). Past research has failed to focus explicitly on differences in the covariance structures of measures produced by ratings and rankings. Although some of the research cited above deals superficially with this issue, there is a virtual absence of research that has compared the covariance properties of ratings and rankings and the consequences of these differences for analysis of the comparative measurement differences between the two techniques. This is especially remarkable since the major anlaytic technique used to decompose measures of value preferences and to ascertain their underlying latent dimensionality, namely factor analysis, depends intimately on the covariance structure of the measures of preferences.[1]

In the following analysis of value measures, we compare the results obtained with a rating technique to those obtained using a more conventional ranking procedure. We first examine measures of the relative importance of value-preferences in the aggregate in order to verify in our data the finding in the literature that ratings and rankings provide similar pictures of relative preference orders. Second, we compare the intercorrelations among rated items with those among rankings. These analyses illustrate some major differences in the covariance properties of measures obtained via the two procedures. Third, we examine results obtained from the factor analysis of the two types of measures, and we examine these differences in light of the differences in their covariance properites. And fourth, we examine the relationships of the latent factors identified through factor analyses with criterion variables thought to be related to these values.

Data

The 1980 General Social Survey (see NORC, 1982) conducted an experimental comparison of three forms of a measurement technique

[1] One study referred to by Munson and McIntyre (1979) factor-analyzed rating and ranking measures of Rokeach's terminal and instrumental values. Three times as many factors were apparently required to account for the correlations among ratings compared to the number required for correlations among rankings. This suggests that the latent structure of the two types of measures are quite different. One problem with generalizing much from

prominent in the literature on the measurement of parental valuation of child qualities (see Kohn, 1969). Two forms were quasireplications of the ranking method originally used by Kohn, and a third form used a rating scale format.

The question used in prior GSS surveys and for one ranking form (Form X) of the current experiment is as follows:

a. The qualities listed on this card may all be important, but which *three* would you say are the *most desirable* for a *child* to have?
b. Which *one* of *these three* is the *most* desirable of all?
c. All of the qualities listed on this card may be desirable, but could you tell me which *three* you consider *least important*?
d. And which *one* of these three is *least important* of all?
   (1) that he has good manners
   (2) that he tries hard to succeed
   (3) that he is honest
   (4) that he is neat and clean
   (5) that he has good sense and sound judgment
   (6) that he has self-control
   (7) that he acts like a boy (she acts like a girl)
   (8) that he gets along well with other children
   (9) that he obeys his parents well
   (10) that he is responsible
   (11) that he is considerate of others
   (12) that he is interested in how and why things happen
   (13) that he is a good student.

On the second ranking form (Form Y), "a child" was substituted for "he" in the usual NORC format in order to remove any gender connotation in the list of qualities. Schaeffer (1982) has recently demonstrated very little difference in the mean rankings using these two forms, and our results were the same for both, so we combine them for presentation below.[2]

The rating form (Form Z) of the values measure asked the following question:

Please look at the qualities listed on this card. All of the qualities may be desirable for a child to have, but could you tell me whether the quality is extremely important, very important, fairly important, not too important, or not important at all?

The list of qualities presented was the same as those presented with the Form X ranking version, that is, phrased with the pronoun "he."

The population sampled in the 1980 NORC survey was the total

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this type of comparison is that the ordinary factor analysis of rankings is inappropriate without modifying the common factor model to accommodate the ipsative properties of the data (See Jackson and Alwin, 1980).

[2] We also confirmed this finding using more appropriate Hotelling T-tests (see Anderson, 1958) on the vectors of means between forms and found no significant difference.

noninstitutionalized English-speaking population of the continental United States, 18 years of age or older. The 1980 sample was produced by full-probability cluster sampling methods.[3] One-third of the sample each received (on a random basis) one of the following three forms:

1) Form X—The standard reduced-ranking form using the "he" pronoun.
2) Form Y—The standard reduced-ranking form using "a child."
3) Form Z—The use of five-point rating scales for each quality separately.

For the analyses reported below, the 13 valued qualities measured using Form X and Y were scored as follows:

5—The trait or quality most valued of all
4—One of the three most valued qualities, but not the most valued
3—Neither one of the three most nor one of the three least valued qualities
2—One of the three least valued, but not the least valued quality
1—The quality least valued of all

In Form Z the response categories are scored as follows:

5—Extremely important
4—Very important
3—Fairly important
2—Not too important
1—Not at all important

These coding schemes are relatively arbitrary and may not necessarily represent interval-level metrics. However, we are convinced by O'Brien's (1979) analysis that the assumption of interval-level scoring is robust with respect to monotonic transformations of the scale units which preserve the ordinal character of the data.

Results

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILD QUALITIES

Consistent with earlier research (e.g., Feather, 1973), we found that ratings and rankings produce very similar results when considered in

[3] The sampling details are given in NORC (1982:207–212). Earlier analyses of these measures in the pre-1980 GSS data restricted the analysis to parents (Kohn, 1976; Alwin and Jackson, 1982b). Consistent with this previous research we present results for the subsample of parents only, defined as respondents who reported ever having had children, regardless of whether they were currently living with them. In addition, we exclude cases for which there is not complete data on the 13 parental value items. In the ranking forms this necessitated deleting 13 percent of the cases, and in the rating form 3 percent of the cases were deleted.

terms of their measurement of the relative importance of the child qualities. Table 1 presents the mean ranks and ratings for each quality studied and the percentage of respondents choosing a particular quality as "most important" (in Forms X and Y) and "extremely important" (in Form Z). Using either technique, the quality estimated to be the most valued in the population is "honesty" and the quality estimated to be the least valued is "acting like a child should." The rank-order of the remaining qualities in terms of their overall relative importance is very similar. The Spearman rank-order correlation between the mean rankings and mean ratings in Table 1 is .966.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Ratings and Rankings of Child Qualities by Experimental Condition: NORC General Social Survey, 1980

	Form			
	Ranking (n=655)		*Rating (n=318)*	
Quality	*Mean Reduced-Rank Score*	*% Ranking Quality Among 3 Most Important*	*Mean Rating*	*% Rating Extremely Important*
Manners	2.05	24.5	3.13	29.6
Tries hard	1.97	17.2	3.05	29.2
Honest	3.12	66.1	3.64	66.0
Neat & clean	1.48	6.4	2.93	24.8
Good sense	2.46	41.1	3.31	40.3
Self-control	2.01	13.7	3.22	35.5
Role	.84	3.4	2.71	24.8
Gets along	1.96	13.6	2.96	24.2
Obeys	2.38	31.6	3.30	44.7
Responsible	2.35	34.2	3.29	38.1
Considerate	2.21	25.3	3.29	36.8
Interested	1.64	16.9	3.00	27.0
Studious	1.65	5.8	2.88	23.6

The ranking technique produced sharper distinctions among the various qualities. Table 1 shows that ratings tend to be somewhat skewed, with the bulk of respondents responding positively, as suggested in the existing literature. For most rated qualities, at least one-quarter of the respondents selected the "extremely important" category, and in several cases, the figure is upwards of 40 percent. These results stand in clear contrast to the ranking of child qualities, wherein the procedure requires that some qualities be ranked below others. Here the percentage of respondents choosing qualities among the "three most important" is quite variable over items, suggesting the greater differentiation of preferences by the ranking approach.

CORRELATIONS AMONG VALUE ITEMS

Rankings have built-in negative correlations among them since the rankings for any given respondent sum to a constant (see Cattell, 1944; Horst, 1965; Clemans, 1966; Jackson and Alwin, 1980; Alwin and Jackson, 1982a; 1982b). And as discussed above, ratings of value preferences may have built-in positive correlations among them due to response biases (e.g., Bentler, 1969). This difference between the covariance

Table 2. Bivariate Correlations Among Child Qualities for Ratings and Rankings: NORC General Social Survey, 1980

Quality	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*
1. Manners	1.0	.385	.204	.517	.183	.320	.400	.444	.444	.304	.259	.249	.389
2. Tries hard	-.067	1.0	.352	.455	.336	.311	.427	.351	.336	.307	.176	.378	.492
3. Honest	-.030	-.166	1.0	.166	.388	.321	.182	.146	.279	.359	.288	.268	.261
4. Neat & Clean	.092	-.090	.005	1.0	.306	.378	.539	.525	.412	.286	.320	.314	.535
5. Good sense	-.186	-.025	-.204	-.152	1.0	.484	.276	.329	.210	.446	.380	.442	.334
6. Self-control	-.106	-.141	.003	-.145	-.043	1.0	.355	.326	.406	.418	.331	.387	.446
7. Role	-.088	-.020	-.053	-.105	-.128	-.046	1.0	.457	.486	.198	.135	.339	.577
8. Gets along	-.020	-.084	-.093	-.139	-.101	-.044	-.100	1.0	.377	.348	.372	.368	.502
9. Obeys	.043	-.195	-.109	.089	-.278	-.054	-.006	-.057	1.0	.310	.290	.248	.485
10. Responsible	-.236	-.072	-.049	-.203	.065	-.014	-.087	-.066	-.259	1.0	.514	.430	.409
11. Considerate	-.162	-.131	-.063	-.137	-.010	-.061	-.151	.010	-.052	.002	1.0	.380	.359
12. Interested	-.185	.002	-.193	-.190	.025	-.083	-.229	-.025	-.186	.032	-.005	1.0	.409
13. Studious	-.073	-.043	-.093	-.084	-.080	-.053	-.143	-.028	.051	-.060	-.073	-.147	1.0

NOTE: Form X and Y N=655 (below diagonal).
Form Z N=318 (above diagonal).

properties of ratings and rankings is illustrated in Table 2. The correlations among the (nonipsative) rating scales are all positive and show considerable intercorrelation in all cases, whereas the intercorrelations among ranked items tend toward zero, and in most instances are negative. As indicated in the foregoing, these covariance properties are directly linked to fundamental differences between the measuring procedures themselves. Consequently, it is difficult to compare the two techniques without taking into account these inherent sources of differences in their covariance structures. Therefore, the factor analysis of ratings must allow for positive correlations due to correlated response errors, and the factor analysis of rankings must take into account the negative correlations of ranked qualities.

ANALYSIS OF LATENT STRUCTURE

The Factor Analysis of Rankings. To analyze the factor structure of the ranking data, we applied the Jackson-Alwin ipsative common factor model (see Jackson and Alwin, 1980; Alwin and Jackson, 1982a; 1982b), which imposes a set of constraints to produce the negative correlations

among disturbances which are inherent in ipsative data.[4] For purposes of comparison, we also evaluated a "nonipsative" factor model, which assumes the disturbances in the factor model are uncorrelated. For the purpose of estimating these parameters, we have arbitrarily constrained the variance of the latent factor to unity. Parameter estimates were obtained using maximum-likelihood confirmatory factor analysis (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1981), and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Parameter Estimates of a Single-Factor Model for Rankings of Child Qualities Using Ipsative and Nonipsative Factor Models: NORC General Social Survey, 1980

Parameter	*Nonipsative Model*	*Ipsative Model*
Factor loadings		
Manners	-.300*	-.281*
Tries hard	.091*	.086
Honest	-.110*	-.095
Neat & clean	-.304*	-.280*
Good sense	.360*	.339*
Self-control	.033	.033
Role	-.103*	-.092
Gets along	.014	.013
Obeys	-.391*	-.385*
Responsible	.312*	.307*
Considerate	.097*	.097*
Interested	.326*	.309*
Studious	-.025	-.051
Factor variance	1.000[a]	1.000[a]
Disturbance variances		
Manners	.595	.609
Tries hard	.636	.647
Honest	.758	.753
Neat & clean	.598	.620
Good sense	.712	.726
Self-control	.418	.420
Role	.861	.860
Gets along	.401	.400
Obeys	.581	.580
Responsible	.493	.493
Considerate	.467	.466
Interested	.855	.858
Studious	.491	.484
Goodness of Fit		
Ipsative model:	L^2 = 100.750, df=53, L^2/df= 1.90	
Nonipsative model:	L^2 = 1290.931, df=54, L^2/df=23.91	

[a] Fixed parameter.
* Factor loading is at least twice its standard error.

[4] The rationale for this model and the details involved in its estimation may be found in Alwin and Jackson (1982a).

The relative sizes of the factor loadings shown in Table 3 are consistent with the notion of a single underlying self-direction/conformity factor in these data, and there is strong similarity between the two factor solutions in this regard. These numbers resemble those obtained both by Kohn (1976) and by Alwin and Jackson (1982b). Negative loadings are associated with conformity items, such as obedience, manners, and cleanliness. Positive loadings are associated with self-direction items, such as good sense and sound judgment, responsibility, and curiosity.[5]

We also examined the residual covariances among the variables under the two models. In virtually every case, the residual covariances are negative in the nonipsative model, suggesting the need for negatively correlated disturbances. Because the ipsative model incorporates such correlations, no such pattern is obvious from the inspection of the residual covariances of that model. Also, because the ipsative common factor model does not ignore the "built-in" negative correlations among disturbances, the fit of this model to the data is literally more than 10 times better than the fit of the nonipsative model (see Table 3). The fit of the ipsative factor model is acceptable (L^2/df=1.90), whereas the fit of the nonipsative model is clearly unacceptable (L^2/df=23.91).[6]

The Factor Analysis of Ratings. We analyzed the factor structure of the rating data using two types of common factor models: (1) a model based upon preliminary exploratory factor analyses specifying two latent factors, and (2) a model that incorporates these two factors and a general method factor, uncorrelated with the other two, upon which all items had equal loadings.[7] This third factor was included to incorporate explicitly the spurious positive correlations which might result from differential response bias (Costner, 1969; Bentler, 1969; Alwin, 1974; Andrews, 1984).

Table 4 displays the factor pattern coefficients in standard form for the

[5] Because of the properties of the common factor model for rankings, the factor pattern coefficients must sum to zero. Therefore, the coefficients in Table 3 *cannot* be interpreted in absolute terms; they simply reflect the relative ordering of items in relation to one another (see Jackson and Alwin, (1980:222-23).

[6] We use the notation L^2 to refer to the sample estimate of the population likelihood-ratio χ^2 value for the model. We should point out that the use of L^2 as an estimate of χ^2 depends upon its maximum likelihood properties. In order for L^2 to estimate χ^2, the variables must have multivariate normal distributions. This assumption is likely to be violated in the case of rankings (but not necessarily for ratings) since rankings are often relatively skewed. We acknowledge this distributional requirement and therefore place less weight on the statistical tests in evaluating the fit of the models to the data. The Bentler-Bonett normed fit index for this model using the null model suggested by Jackson and Alwin (1980:235) is .66. By this criterion this may not appear to be a very good fit to the data, but given the difficulty of modeling ipsative data (see Alwin and Jackson, 1982b:211-12), it is not clear what an acceptable alternative would be.

[7] The results obtained by relaxing this constraint are not very different from those reported here.

two-factor model, along with the estimated factor intercorrelations and disturbance variances. As in the case of rankings, the rating data tend to cluster in a manner consistent with Kohn's conceptual framework. That is, the conformity-related characteristics of children tend to cluster together—obedience, good manners, neatness and cleanliness—and self-direction qualities also tend to cluster—curiosity, consideration, self-control, responsibility, and good judgment. However, instead of the clusters being opposed at polar ends of the same continuum as in the case of rankings, here the clusters are positively correlated ($r=.65$), which is

Table 4. Parameter Estimates for Two- and Three-Factor Models for Ratings of Child Qualities: NORC General Social Survey, 1980

	Two-Factor Model		*Three-Factor Model*		
Parameter	*I*	*II*	*I*	*II*	*III*
Factor Loadings					
Manners	.411*	.000[a]	.340*	.000[a]	.587*
Tries hard	.402*	.095	.149	-.197*	.587*
Honest	-.009	.266	-.363*	-.187	.587*
Neat & clean	.608*	-.038	.513*	.078	.587*
Good sense	.000[a]	.423*	.000[a]	.153*	.587*
Self-control	.175*	.321	.071	.079	.587*
Role	.945*	-.238*	.490*	-.182	.587*
Gets along	.425*	.090	.463*	.247*	.587*
Obeys	.431*	.035	.280*	.000[a]	.587*
Responsible	-.046	.503*	-.067	.328*	.587*
Considerate	-.030	.411*	.000[a]	.511*	.587*
Interested	.125	.396*	.064	.160*	.587*
Studious	.544*	.107	.377*	.053	.587*
Factor covariances	1.000[a]		1.000[a]		
	.648*	1.000[a]	-.223	1.000[a]	
			.000[a]	.000[a]	1.000[a]
Disturbance variances					
Manners		.632			.633
Tries hard		.632			.566
Honest		.748			.499
Neat & clean		.453			.433
Good sense		.570			.612
Self-control		.596			.614
Role		.414			.393
Gets along		.566			.495
Obeys		.612			.616
Responsible		.456			.482
Considerate		.592			.442
Interested		.619			.638
Studious		.419			.445
Goodness of fit					
Two-factor model: $L^2=142.962$, df=53, $L^2/df=2.70$					
Three-factor model: $L^2=120.750$, df=54, $L^2/df=2.24$					

[a] Fixed parameter.
* Factor loading is at least twice its standard error.

clearly inconsistent with the structure of ranking data. The fit of this model is only marginally acceptable; the ratio of the L^2 to degrees of freedom is 2.70.

Some of the lack of fit evident here may be due to this model's failure to explicitly take into account the effects of correlated response bias; we therefore estimated the parameters of a three-factor confirmatory factor model designed to account for these effects. The results for this three-factor model (shown in Table 4) and the improved goodness-of-fit measures demonstrate the importance of positing such a general method factor for rating data. The loadings on the method factor are statistically significant, and the improvement in fit of this model as compared to the two-factor model is significant ($\Delta L^2 = 22.21$, df$=1$).[8] Moreover, the correlation between the latent self-direction and conformity factors is now negative ($r = -.22$), rather than highly positive, although this correlation is not statistically significant. Thus, by including this method factor we improve the fit to the data and reduce the correlation between the two substantive latent factors to what we would expect on the basis of the ranking results. So by modeling the methodological properites of value ratings, we have found evidence of a latent structure in these data similar though not identical to that of the ranking data.

CRITERION-VALIDITY OF RATINGS AND RANKINGS

Even though the results of the factor analysis of ratings and rankings are different, we have identified concepts of self-direction and conformity as "latent" dimensions in both types of data. It is therefore worthwhile to examine the correlations between the latent dimensions and theoretically relevant predictor variables. For this purpose, we correlated the parental values factors with a set of predictors used in previous studies, namely, parental occupational prestige, education, and income. These socioeconomic indicators were chosen because their relationship to parental values has been the focus of much previous research (e.g., Lynd and Lynd, 1929; Duvall, 1946; Miller and Swanson, 1958; Lenski, 1961; Kohn, 1969, 1976, 1977, 1981; Alwin and Jackson, 1982b; Alwin, 1984).

The measurement of these variables in the 1980 NORC survey is as follows:

1. *Respondent's occupational prestige*—measured in the metric of Hodge-Siegel-Rossi scores (Siegel, 1971) assigned to 1970 U.S. Census detailed occupation codes.

[8] This is not a hierarchical test, since the models are not nested, but the improved fit is evident from the reduction in the ratio of L^2 to degrees of freedom. The Bentler-Bonett normed fit index for these models, using a null model which posits only random variance in the measures, are .91 and .93 for the two- and three-factor models, respectively.

2. *Respondent's education*—measured as the number of years of formal schooling completed.
3. *Family income*—measured as the total family income, from all sources, before taxes in the year preceding the survey. Our analysis assigns the midpoints of 12 income categories using $100 units.

Past research indicates that the contrast between self-direction and conformity, as measured by the latent factors identified above for the ranking data, correlates positively with these socioeconomic variables. On this basis we would expect the self-direction dimension of the ratings to correlate positively and the conformity dimension to correlate nega-

Table 5. Zero-order Correlations of Latent Factors with Criterion Variables: NORC General Social Survey, 1978

Model	Predictor		
	Education	*Occupational Prestige*	*Income*
1. Rankings—single-factor nonipsative model			
I. Self-direction/conformity	.591*	.422*	.344*
2. Rankings—single-factor ipsative model			
I. Self-direction/conformity	.624*	.448*	.367*
3. Ratings—two-factor model			
I. Self-direction	.053	-.045	-.058
II. Conformity	-.355*	-.321*	-.319*
4. Ratings—three-factor model			
I. Self-direction	.036	.210*	-.062
II. Conformity	-.532*	-.267*	-.401*
III. Differential bias	-.060	-.181*	-.120

* Coefficient is greater than twice its standard error.

tively with these variables. We estimated the relationships of these predictor variables with the latent self-direction/conformity factors underlying the rating and ranking data using linear structural equation (LISREL) models (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1981).

As anticipated, the self-direction/conformity factor underlying the rankings shows strong correlation with these indicators of socioeconomic position. Table 5 presents the zero-order correlations of the latent factors underlying our models for rankings and ratings with the set of theoretically relevant parental characteristics. The two factor models we have contrasted for ranking data, the ipsative common factor model and the nonipsative model, are quite similar in the magnitudes of correlations with these socioeconomic factors. The relationships are slightly higher for the ipsative factor model than for the nonipsative model, but the differences here are small. This is an important result because there

has been no research to date that has reported an empirical comparison of these two models.

In the rating data (see the results for the three-factor model) the "conformity" latent variable correlates negatively with the measures of socioeconomic position, as anticipated. The "self-direction" latent variable assessed by the ratings correlates positively with occupational prestige, but, contrary to our expectations, it is essentially uncorrelated with education and income. This is a striking difference between the results obtained using ratings and rankings. The comparable relationships for the two-factor version of the model are generally weaker, which again demonstrates the value of positing a general method factor for the rating data.

Summarizing these results, the latent factor underlying the ranking data is correlated with theoretically relevant predictor variables in a manner consistent with previous research. While the results for the rating data are not in dramatic contrast to these findings, generally weaker relationships are involved, as evidenced both by the weaker correlation between the latent self-direction and conformity dimensions and the correlations with the predictor variables. Moreover, the major difference between the results for ratings and rankings is the lack of correlation of the rating self-direction factor with the socioeconomic indicators. Thus, one would reach different substantive conclusions using ratings compared to the use of rankings.

Summary and Conclusions

Although ranking methods tend to be preferred for measuring social values, the empirical evidence available from past research suggests that rating techniques may be used just as effectively. In our analyses of parental values for children, we found that ratings and rankings produced similar results in terms of ordering the relative importance of value choices in the aggregate but are dissimilar with regard to latent structure. The main reason for the observed differences seems to be the different constraints introduced by the two techniques in the measurement process. The ranking technique forces value-choices to be generally negatively correlated, whereas the rating approach encourages positive correlations. As a consequence, the latent variable structures for the two sets of measures are quite different.

However, even after we took the method-induced positive and negative correlations between the items into account in our analyses, the latent structures of the rating and ranking items were different. A single bipolar factor was found to represent the latent content underlying the ranking measures, whereas two separate and distinct substantive factors

were found underlying the rating data. Although these two factors corresponded to the two concepts contrasted in the bipolar factor for rankings, the correlation between the two rating factors was not as strongly negative as the ranking analysis suggests it would be. The two types of measures produce different correlations between values and theoretically relevant predictor variables. All of these differences mitigate against the conclusion that ratings and rankings are interchangeable in the measurement of values.

Value researchers have consistently argued that the ranking technique is uniquely suited to the measurement of values, owing to the inherent comparative nature of values. From this point of view the present findings may be interpreted as support for this premise. However, these results are also consistent with a somewhat different interpretation; that is, rankings may impose a somewhat artificial contrast on the data and, as a result, measure both the latent dimension of contrast as well as the ability to see logical contrasts in the list of ranked qualities. It seems worthwhile to ask, in part because of our results using ratings, whether the ranking approach may in fact create artificial contrasts among the latent content of the measures.

Recall that the correlation between self-direction and conformity in the ranking data is in theory −1.0, since the two concepts define a bipolar factor. The latent variable underlying the set of rankings of child qualities has therefore been thought of as a continuum that distinguishes between the two extremes on a standard of desirability, i.e., the contrast between self-direction and conformity (Kohn. 1969). If one assumes that self-direction and conformity are contrasting values, as would be expected on the basis of the ranking data, the results for the rating data—that self-direction and conformity are only slightly related in a negative way—may seem incongruous. And if the values in question are in fact contrasting in this sense, one would expect the self-direction cluster of the ratings to correlate more strongly than it does with the socioeconomic predictor variables. Perhaps instead, self-direction and conformity are in actuality not contrasting values, in the sense that there is not a strong negative correlation between them. Is it not possible that the ranking technique essentially forces a contrast between them by asking respondents to make choices that they may not otherwise make? Since the conformity factor underlying the rating measures correlates nearly as strongly with the socioeconomic predictors as the contrast between self-direction and conformity in the ranking data, the correlation between the latent factor underlying the rankings and the socioeconomic predictors may be solely due to an association between the latter variables and values for conformity.

Although we raise these two differing interpretations of the differences

between the rating and ranking results, it is not possible on the basis of our present analysis to choose between them. To conclude that ratings and rankings measure somewhat different things when viewed in terms of the latent content involved does not necessarily lead to the additional conclusion that one is the more valid approach to measuring values. Until further research evidence is developed on these issues, particularly with respect to the extent to which rankings impose contrasts which do not occur using other methods, such a conclusion would be premature.

It may be difficult to generalize from these findings to the measurement of other kinds of value phenomena. One's choice of measurement approach should depend upon theoretical considerations, as much as on knowledge of the properties of various measurement techniques. The problems we have addressed in this paper are closely tied to a well-defined set of theoretical issues, and our analysis informs the choice of measurement strategy in this context. To the degree that other theoretical problems are similar to those studied here, there may be some correspondence between the measurement issues involved. More generally, in the absence of a priori theoretical knowledge about the content one wishes to measure, generalizations about the relative advantages of various measurement strategies are difficult. We look forward to further research that will bring more theory-based evidence to bear on the relative advantages and disadvantages of these and other approaches to the measurement of values.

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Testing for the Potential for Nonresponse Bias in Sample Surveys

DENNIS K. PEARL AND DAVID FAIRLEY

THIS ARTICLE recommends a statistical hypothesis test to investigate nonresponse bias. Even in a well-designed survey, the unknown opinions of individuals who fail to respond cannot contribute to estimates of population preferences. Nonresponse bias occurs if there is a difference between the preferences of these nonrespondents and those of the responders on whom estimates are based. The magnitude of this difference times the proportion of nonrespondents gives the expected size of the bias. Thus the problem is particularly acute for mail surveys which, though popular for being inexpensive, sometimes have response rates well below 50 percent. Interestingly, the problem of nonresponse bias in mail surveys was noted in the statistical literature as early as 1838 (Porter, 1838).

Researchers who conduct mail surveys try to reduce the size of the nonresponse bias in a variety of ways, most notably through efforts to stimulate higher participation (Linsky, 1975). For a given level of participation, they may attempt to adjust their estimates through the application of reasonable sample weights. One method gives greater weights to respondents who took longer or were more difficult to bring into the sample on the assumption that they more closely resemble the nonrespondents (Pace, 1939; Politz and Simmons, 1949). A second

Abstract This article proposes using a statistical hypothesis test to check for the nonresponse bias that results when there is a correlation between strength of opinion and reply on issue preference. This idea is developed through an example of two mail polls conducted by a Columbus, Ohio newspaper to ascertain voter preference prior to the November 1983 election.

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weighting method takes advantage of other surveyed variables for which the population distribution is nearly known (e.g., sex, race, age, income, vote in previous election). Here the sample may be aligned with such check data through ratio estimation.

We propose a technique for judging the scope of the nonresponse problem—a statistical hypothesis test for association between the participants' preference on an issue and the strength of their opinion about that issue. People who feel strongly about the issues in a survey are more likely to respond. This produces nonresponse bias when the strength of opinion is related to the reply on issue preference, an effect which has been frequently noted (e.g., Armstrong and Overton, 1977; Baur, 1947; Donald, 1960; Scott, 1961). An early example is Benson's 1946 discussion of a mail survey on Franklin Roosevelt's planned changes in the Supreme Court:

> . . . the mail ballots indicated a very much stronger feeling on the part of those who opposed Roosevelt's Supreme Court plan. This fact, plus other available data, such as the proportion of Democrats and Republicans in the sample, led to the conclusion that a disproportionate percentage of people who strongly opposed the court plan made a special point of registering their protest in this mail survey (Benson, 1946:351).

Since the estimation problem has always been paramount, the fact that the population distribution of strength of opinion is unknown seems to have shifted the attention of past investigators away from using it to check for possible nonresponse bias. However, in view of the importance of strength of opinion, it would seem prudent to check for this source of nonresponse bias through a statistical hypothesis test. If the test finds nonresponse bias, it would be best not to publish the poll at all. Otherwise we suggest that the results of such a test should be included in the presentation of any sample survey with an appreciable nonresponse rate.

An Example

We will develop our proposal through an example. On November 8, 1983, there were three controversial initiatives on the statewide ballot in Ohio. Issue 1 would raise the legal drinking age from 19 to 21. Issue 2 would require a 60 percent vote of each house of the legislature to pass tax measures, and issue 3 would repeal all tax legislation passed during 1983. In addition, voters in Columbus were to choose a new mayor. The *Dispatch*, a Columbus, Ohio newspaper, conducted two mail surveys to estimate voter preference a week before the election. In one survey 6761 ballots were mailed statewide to a random sample of registered voters. The ballots were color-coded according to the county of residence. For the other survey, 6353 ballots regarding the municipal election were

mailed to a random sample of registered Columbus voters. Along with their positions on the issues, respondents indicated how strongly they felt about each issue and checked descriptions of themselves by age, sex, race, religion, education, union membership, party affiliation, and how they voted in the 1982 governor's race and the 1980 presidential election. In both surveys a three-day "window" was allowed for collecting returns.

This is just the type of example for which nonresponse bias is the most troublesome. Most methods for stimulating response or adjustments based on multiple mailings could not be applied because of the need to publish results before the election. Indeed, the response rate was low, with 24.5 percent (1658) of the statewide sample and 22.4 percent (1423) of the Columbus sample responding. The *Dispatch* was able to alleviate some of the potential for nonresponse bias by weighting the responses to fit the known demographics[1] of voters in the state and in the city. Results of the poll and of the election are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The Results of the Final Columbus *Dispatch* Polls for the November 8, 1983 Elections

	Results of Polls		*Results of Election*
	Unweighted % in Favor	*Demographically Adjusted % in Favor*	*% in Favor*
Statewide poll			
Issue 1 (drinking age)	56%	56%	41%
Issue 2 (60% majority)	50%	50%	41%
Issue 3 (tax repeal)	56%	55%	44%
Columbus mayoral poll			
Rinehart (Republican)	52%	51%	51%
Others[a]	48%	49%	49%

[a] Includes Dorrian (Democrat) and Ross (Independent, write-in)

The statewide initiatives which were predicted to do well by the poll were all defeated soundly by the voters. On the other hand, the mayoral poll did a good job in predicting the election results. *Dispatch* columnists attributed the difference between the statewide poll and the election to a rapidly changing voter opinion created by greater spending on the part of

[1] "Demographics" includes such variables as county of residence, party affiliation, 1982 gubernatorial and 1980 presidential choice, along with other variables for which the population distribution is known.

those opposing the initiatives (Jordan, 1983). Another important reason appears to be nonresponse bias. Table 2 shows how this bias could have occurred. Here we find stronger opinions to be associated with greater support for the initiatives. Because they comprised the majority of those responding, individuals who felt very strongly gave the initiatives their lead in the poll. On the other hand, individuals with less decided opinions may have been a majority of those actually voting, causing the defeat of the initiatives in the election.

Table 2. Respondent Preference by Strength of Opinion in the Columbus *Dispatch* Polls

	Strength of Opinion		
	Very Strong	*Fairly Strong*	*Might Change Mind*
Statewide poll			
% of respondents	64%	30%	6%
% within category favoring issue 1	63%	46%	38%
% of respondents	62%	29%	9%
% within category favoring issue 2	54%	47%	35%
% of respondents	66%	24%	10%
% within category favoring issue 3	60%	48%	46%
Columbus mayoral poll			
% of respondents	58%	32%	10%
% within category for Rinehart	52%	55%	48%

For the sake of illustration, assume that strength of opinion is the only source of nonresponse bias. This makes the estimates of voter preference in Table 2 valid for the nonrespondents as well as the respondents. Now consider issue 2 and suppose that three-fourths of the nonrespondents were in the "might change mind" category, one-fourth in the "fairly strong" category, and none in the "very strong" opinion category. Then, we would estimate overall voter preference to be

$$\text{estimated \% favoring issue 2} = 54\%\ [.62\ (.245) + 0\ (.755)] + 47\%\ [.29\ (.245) + .25\ (.755)] + 35\%\ [.09\ (.245) + .75\ (.755)] = 41\%$$

This is the actual percentage voting for issue 2 in the election. Thus, strength of opinion alone could account for the poll's error in predicting issue 2. On the statewide issues, nearly two-thirds of the respondents

said they felt very strongly about their opinions. It is doubtful that this is representative of the strength of opinion among all voters, especially if we believe that voter opinion was changing rapidly in the last week of the campaign.

Individuals with strong opinions were again overrepresented in the mayoral poll. However, in this case, voter preference does not appear to be associated with strength of opinion, and this poll did well in predicting the election. Thus to examine the potential for nonresponse bias, we suggest using a statistic which measures the correlation between respondent preference and strength of opinion.

One such statistic is Kendall's tau (Kendall, 1938; Burr, 1960). We apply Kendall's tau assuming that we originally drew a simple random sample from the population of interest and made no adjustment for demographics. In the more commonly encountered situations, a testing procedure tailor-made to the form of the sampling design and the demographic adjustment would be applied.[2] Values of Kendall's tau and approximate *P*-values for testing the hypothesis of no correlation in our examples are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Testing for Correlation between Strength of Opinion and Respondent Preference in the *Dispatch* Polls using Kendall's tau[a]

	Value of Kendall's tau[b]	*p-valve*
Statewide poll		
Issue 1	7.37	< .001
Issue 2	4.32	< .001
Issue 3	4.88	< .001
Mayoral poll	−0.15	.88

[a] Computer packages such as SPSS can handle the computations automatically.

[b] Values in the table are the standardized version of Kendall's tau which has an approximately standard normal distribution.

For the statewide initiatives, the independence of preference and the strength of opinion are strongly rejected by the test. The positive values of Kendall's tau indicate the likely direction of the bias, a quantity of interest in itself (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). In addition, even in large samples, if the statistical test detects nonresponse bias, then this bias is likely to be at least of the same order of magnitude as the standard error. Finding this extra source of error invalidates any statements about

[2] These tests would examine only that part of the correlation between preference and strength of opinion *not* explained by demographics. See Quade (1974) for a discussion of distribution-free measures of partial correlation and the sampling theory necessary to carry out this type of test.

accuracy based on sampling error alone. The *Dispatch* claimed, with 95 percent confidence, that the estimates in the statewide poll were accurate to within ±3 percent. Carrying out the hypothesis tests provided hard evidence that this interval was much too small.

The *p*-value for the mayoral poll (Table 3) is large, indicating we have not found strength of opinion to be a potential source of nonresponse bias. In this case the *Dispatch* could have made the results of their mayoral poll more credible by noting that they had found no strong evidence for bias due to strength of opinion.

If Kendall's tau does not detect a correlation, one should be cautious nevertheless. The test may be unable to detect bias if there are not reasonable sample sizes in different strength of opinion groups. Thus, careful thought should go into the wording of the strength of opinion question(s) in order to optimize the effectiveness of the hypothesis test. Also, other sources of error, apart from strength of opinion, may exist. As an example the difference between the poll and the election results for issue 3 cannot be entirely explained by strength of opinion. In particular, if we assume that strength of opinion is the only source of nonresponse bias, then the estimated "worst case" bias would occur if all the nonrespondents fell in the "might change mind" category. In this case

$$\text{estimated worst case bias} = \text{nonresponse rate} \times (\text{respondent estimate} - \text{worst case nonrespondent estimate}) = .755\ (56\% - 46\%) = 7\%$$

However, the poll and the election results differed by 56 percent − 44 percent = 12 percent for issue 3. Thus other factors, such as people changing their minds, selection bias, and perhaps wording in the ballot, must have also played a part.

Discussion

It is not surprising to find nonresponse bias due to strength of opinion in sample surveys. Controversial issues are often put before the public through the efforts of an enthusiastic constituent group. Opposition is likely to be less fervent, resulting in the type of correlation between strength of opinion and preference seen in the *Dispatch*'s statewide poll. Other circumstances of the *Dispatch* poll are also common. Often researchers desire a snapshot of a rapidly changing public opinion or a prediction of a rapidly approaching election. In these cases, systems of weighting based on length of time for response or on multiple mailings cannot be applied, thus leaving strength of opinion as an uncorrected source of bias.

A statistical hypothesis test to check for nonresponse bias can be a valuable tool in this limited, but not uncommon set of circumstances. If

the test detects bias, then the bias is a serious source of error, and the usual estimates of the poll's accuracy are grossly exaggerated. It would be misleading to publish the poll results since they would be valid only if the bias were counterbalanced by other biases, or if nonrespondents felt just as strongly as respondents—dubious possibilities at best. When the test does not reject, it adds credence to the poll results. There are still many pitfalls though: the problems of selection and response bias which mail polls share with other kinds of opinion polls; nonresponse bias unrelated to strength of opinion or demographics; nonresponse bias related to strength of opinion, but not detected by the test.[3] Also, the low response rates in mail polls amplify any nonresponse bias that exists.

Trusting the results of a mail survey is like lowering yourself into a dark pit in search of treasure and trusting that you won't be bitten by a snake. With the hypothesis test of this article, we are making the modest suggestion that before you go into the pit, you should stand outside and listen for a hissing sound. If you hear one, do not go on, for while the snake *may* be a small one, it is not worth the risk. On the other hand, if you do not hear anything, you may proceed with caution, being confident that at worst you will be bitten by a quiet snake!

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[3] In many practical situations, this last source of error won't be great if the test does not reject. See Fairley and Pearl, 1984, for a discussion of the power of Kendall's tau to detect bias.

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The Polls: Social Security

ROBERT Y. SHAPIRO AND TOM W. SMITH

> We put those payroll contributions there so as to give the contributors a legal, moral, and political right to collect their pensions and their unemployment benefits. With those taxes in there, no damn politician can ever scrap my Social Security program.
>
> —FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (quoted in Schlesinger, 1958: 308-9)
>
> Social Security Marking Golden Anniversary
>
> —*The New York Times*, August 14, 1985: A1

ROOSEVELT was right. It has been 50 years since the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935, and Roosevelt's strategy bolstered both his program and the reputation of his party. Although "Social Security" was originally applied to the entire act by Congress, the term subsequently became synonymous for only the old-age and survivors' insurance program (now part of the old-age, survivors', and disability insurance program, OASDI). The establishment of Social Security marked the late and modest expansion, compared with other affluent countries, of the American welfare state (see Wilensky, 1975). Since then Social Security and many other social welfare policies have had substantial support, and there is some evidence that the benefits from these programs have become—or have been perceived as—rights of citizenship (cf. Zald, 1985; Erskine, 1975a, 1975b).

It is particularly striking that during the 1935–1985 period as a whole, public polls failed to track trends in opinion toward old-age assistance and Social Security. From 1950 to the mid-1970s we found only an average of about one survey question per year—and all of these questions were worded differently. There were a fair number of questions asked in the 1930s and 1940s, revealing very high levels of support (Schiltz, 1970), and there have been great flurries of interest in the late 1970s and 1980s as the financial problems of the federal government and Social Security system increased and as senior citizens and their

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This is the first in a series of articles on public opinion and social welfare policy.

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representatives and organizations gained the spotlight (the current issue being the controversy and confusion over the timing and magnitude of the cost-of-living adjustments). But for the most part, Social Security has been less salient than other domestic and foreign issues, since the early consensus which emerged made it less of a curiosity for journalists, public pollsters, and academics. In contrast, private polls conducted for life insurance and other industries took special interest in this issue from the 1970s on (Crespi, 1982).

That politicians have expanded the Social Security system (and that the suggestion of any reductions is politically risky business) attests to FDR's insight and perhaps also his ability to lead—or manipulate—public opinion. Social Security and other social welfare issues are complex matters when one takes into account costs, benefits, and administrative procedures; but Social Security's emphasis on workers' required contributions to the government's social insurance system gave the public an easy way to understand the program, since it fit in well with American values concerning the work ethic, capitalism, and democracy (see McClosky and Zaller, 1984). It has never been made clear that the social insurance program does not consist of an employer and employee paying for the employee's *own* retirement and that it is *redistributive*, involving transfer payments from the young to the old through a *regressive* tax on earned income.

Preferences concerning redistributive policies may be especially susceptible to the influence of incomplete or inaccurate information, and this has serious implications for democratic policy making (see Page, 1983). Interpreting survey data requires more than the usual care, since polling organizations may add to the confusion by frequently failing to provide detailed explanations about policies in their questions (Light, 1985: 71-73), and by asking somewhat inaccurate questions (e.g., more than 25 which we have assembled about pensions and allegedly proposed cuts in benefits). Some of the pessimism that has been expressed about the future of Social Security, in lieu of major reform, can be attributed to the public's lack of information and the absence of a fully informed public discussion (Penner, 1982).

Michael E. Schiltz's (1970) excellent and exhaustive study tried to determine whether the public's support for Social Security emerged as a result of the program's insurance orientation rather than simply because of the assistance it provided to the elderly. His analysis was inconclusive, because of the sensitivity of responses to question wordings and especially the ambiguity in the 1930s associated with the term "pension." Analysis of the available data for later years also requires special attention to wording and context in assessing levels of support and changes in preferences: for example, what specific response categories are offered concerning who should be responsible for taking care of retired people or the elderly; whether programs are described in detail in the questions; whether questions ask about existing policies or proposed changes (which seem to get less support); and whether a change is proposed in order to help the Social Security system or in order to reduce the federal budget.

We have tried to piece together "trends" in opinion toward Social Security, which include items often having significantly different wordings. Some of the questions measuring the opinions which we describe are not included below because of space limitations. The data since 1965 show levels of support similar to what Schiltz found for the earlier period, and they indicate a fair amount of stability of opinion (cf. Page and Shapiro, 1982). One reason for this is the contributory and insurance features of Social Security. The great expansion of social welfare programs, especially Social Security, which occurred between the

mid-1960s and the early 1970s (Patterson, 1981:157) no doubt required public approval (cf. Page and Shapiro, 1983). During this period the proportion of elderly increased and, more important, the percentage who had contributed and were eligible for retirement benefits rose dramatically. There is still noticeable support for continuing worker contributions to the retirement program.

The data also show that the public has persistently approved of existing or higher levels of government spending or activity concerning Social Security. Support seems to increase when questions suggest some threat to the system. There has been a surprising public willingness to be taxed, especially if benefits are at stake, but there is also less complaint about high Social Security taxes (despite their regressiveness) than about federal income taxes (see Ladd, 1985). There has been continued (although perhaps diminishing) support for expanding the system to include government and other uncovered employees. There has been overwhelming support for indexing benefits to inflation and opposition to taxing everyone's Social Security benefits, but the public is more open to limiting the size and frequency of cost-of-living increases and taxing the benefits of the well-to-do. The public opposes raising the retirement age and lowering benefits to early retirees, despite increases in life expectancy and the improved health of the population. It has also favored changes which would increase the earnings limits for retirees.

The role of the perceived "need" of Social Security recipients may be less important than the program's contributory structure in determining public support. On the other hand, references to Social Security inevitably evoke images of the elderly, which in turn suggest eventual infirmities and needs in *very* old age (although there are forms of assistance which may be better than retirement insurance in providing for certain needs). Thus, simply being old establishes a need regardless of other personal characteristics and circumstances (cf. Cook, 1979). The data seem to show more support when reference is made to helping "elderly people" rather than to "Social Security." The idea that the elderly are more in need than other people is not necessarily warranted by the facts. There is considerable variation in economic well-being among the elderly, and the economic status of retired Americans on average improved considerably from the past and relative to other groups, in part because of the expansion of the Social Security system itself (including cost-of-living increases in benefits) and of other private pension plans. The extent to which these and future developments will accurately be taken into account will depend on the content of the public debate and the quality of information that citizens get from elites and the media. There is some evidence already that although Social Security is as popular as ever, it is not the most sacred issue; rankings of spending priorities in 1984 and 1985 place Social Security behind support in such areas as law enforcement, health care, and education.

What will affect continued support for Social Security is the public's evaluation of its past success and the interests served by the program (cf. Taylor, 1981). Social Security assists not only the elderly, who can be influential as a growing (potential) voting block and through their representatives and pressure groups, but also those who supply goods and services to them and younger generations that may be less concerned about their own retirement (e.g., they support the program, although they tend to think it will not be available to them) than about how Social Security relieves them of financial hardships in caring for aging parents, grandparents, and other family members.

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Change and Public Opinion Change Project at NORC (originally supported by the National Science Foundation, Grant #SES-7912969 AO1). These data were compiled from published and unpublished sources, including Cantril (with Strunk, 1951), *Public Opinion* magazine, Schiltz (1970), Cook et al. (1985), and with the assistance of the Roper Center, University of Connecticut; the Louis Harris Data Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan; and the NORC Library. The national sample sizes are at least 1000 unless noted otherwise. Further information about these data sets can be obtained from the appropriate archive or survey organization.

ABC/WP —American Broadcasting Company/*The Washington Post*
A-S —Audits & Surveys/ The Merit Report
GALLUP —Gallup Polls, American Institute for Public Opinion
HARRIS —Louis Harris and Associates
LAT —*The Los Angeles Times*
NBC —National Broadcasting Company
NYT/CBS —*The New York Times*/Columbia Broadcasting System
NORC —NORC, University of Chicago
NORC-GSS—NORC's General Social Surveys
ROPER —Roper Organization
SRC —Survey Research Center, University of Michigan
SRC/CPS —Survey Research Center/Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan, American National Elections Studies
TRENDEX—Trendex, Inc./General Electric Quarterly Index of Company Relations
YSW —Yankelovich, Skelly, and White
YSW/MAP —Monitoring Attitudes of the Public by the Institute of Life Insurance, surveys by Yankelovich, Skelly, and White

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Government Responsibility for Social Security and Retirement

ROPER: I'm going to read off a number of different things. For each would you tell me whether you think it is a privilege that a person should have to earn, or a *right* to which he is entitled as a citizen? First . . . Adequate provision for retirement years?

	Feb 1975	*Feb 1978*
Right	61%	61%
Privilege	36	37
Don't know	3	2

YSW/MAP,: Everyone has a right to an adequate pension at retirement age.

	1974	*1980*	*1981*
Agree entirely	82%	66%	67%
Agree somewhat	11	21	23
Disagree somewhat	4	7	6
Disagree entirely	3	6	3

YSW/MAP,: Preferred major source of retirement income—Which of the following should provide for the major portion of a person's retirement income: the individual, through such things as savings, annuities, or investment programs; the employer or union, through pension plans; [or] the government through programs set up for everyone?

	1969	*1971*	*1973*	*1975*	*1977*	*1978*	*1981*	*Spring 1984*
Individual	50%	42%	39%	39%	35%	36%	45%	48%
Employer or union	28	34	38	35	43	34	31	33
Government	23	22	22	24	21	28	22	18
Don't know	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1

NORC, HARRIS: Do you think that Old Age pensions should be mostly controlled by the Federal Government or mostly controlled by each state government?

	3/42	*5/42*	*10/42*	*11/43*	*5/73*[a]
Federal	65%	63%	62%	58%	87%
State, local	35	37	38	42	13%

[a] Harris: Many people believe that there are certain policy decisions affecting our lives which should be decided on the federal level, while other decisions should be made on the state level and still other decisions should be made at the local level—city, town, or county. For each item on this list [hand respondent card] tell me if you think the major decisions about it should be made at the federal level in Washington, the state level, or the local level? . . . Social Security.

Support for Social Security and Old-Age Pensions

GALLUP: Are you in favor of government old-age pensions for needy persons?

	12/35	*8/38*[a]	*1/39*[a]	*11/39*[a]	*7/41*[b]
Yes	89%	91%	94%	90%	93%
No	11	9	6	10	7

[a] Do you believe in government old-age pensions? [b] Are you in favor of government old-age pensions?

ROPER, GALLUP, NORC: Do you approve of the United States old-age pension law?

	Roper	*Gallup*			*NORC*	
	2/37[a]	*1/38*[b]	*7/38*[c]	*1/39*[d]	*4/43*[e]	*8/44*[f]
Approve, good idea	78%	73%	89%	87%	97%	96%
Disapprove, bad idea	22	27	11	13	3	4

[a]Estimate from Schiltz (1970, Table 2-1). [b]Do you approve of this [the present Social Security] tax? [c]Do you approve of the present social security laws which provide old age pensions and unemployment insurance? [d]Would you be willing to pay a sales tax or an income tax in order to provide these [old-age] pensions? [e]As you may know, under the present Social Security law, workers in certain occupations have to save money so when they are too old to work they will receive money from the government like insurance. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea? [f]As you know, at the present time some workers have 1% taken out of their pay checks under the Social Security law. This assures them some income when they become too old to work. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?

GALLUP, ROPER: Do you approve of the present Social Security laws which provide old-age pensions and unemployment insurance?

	Gallup *7/38*	*Roper* *8/52*[a]	*Roper* *10/52*[a]
Yes, good thing	89%	92%	92%
No, mistake	11	8	8

[a] Here are some things that have been done in the past 20 years and we'd like to know which you think were good to do and which you consider mistakes. Do you think it was a good thing to do or that it was a mistake . . . Social Security laws were passed that give pensions to people over 65?

GALLUP, YSW/MAP, HARRIS, LAT, NYT/CBS, A-S: It has been proposed that as a cost saving measure the retirement age for Social Security be increased from 65 to 68. Would you favor or oppose such a change?

	Gallup	*YSW/MAP*	*Harris*			*Gallup*	*LAT*	*NYT/CBS*	*A-S*
	10/77	*1981*[a]	*1981*[b]	*8/81*[c]	*10/82*[d]	*11/82*[e]	*11/82*[f]	*1/83*[g]	*4/83*[h]
Favor	30%	26%	36%	33%	41%	30%	45%	39%	34%
Oppose	64	59	56	65	58	63	52	57	62
No opinion	7	14	8	2	1	7	3	4	4

[a]Gradually raise the age at which people receive full retirement benefits from age 65 to 68 beginning in the year 2000. [b]A number of recommendations have been made to help the Social Security system. Please tell me whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of each of the following recommendations? . . . Gradually raise the retirement age for full Social Security benefits from 65 to 68 years of age. [c]As you know, there is much discussion about changing Social Security to put that system on a sounder financial basis. Let me ask you about some proposals that have been made for Social Security changes. Would you favor or oppose . . . Changing the age from 65 to 68 that people can go on Social Security with full benefits, by the year 1990? [d]Same as note b, except " . . . Tell me if you approve or disapprove of the following recommendations." [e]As I read off some of the ways Social Security could help pay its way, please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of each one: . . . Gradually increase the age at which people become eligible to receive Social Security benefits? [f]Would you approve of gradually increasing the retirement age for Social Security benefits, or would you disapprove of that? [g]The Social Security system is spending more money to pay benefits than it is now taking in from Social Security taxes. We want your opinion about some of the proposals that have been made to solve this. To solve the Social Security problem would you be willing or not willing to . . . raise the age at which people are eligible for full benefits from 65 years old to 68? [h] . . . The retirement age at which you can get full benefits will be raised to age 66 by the year 2009 and to age 67 by the year 2027. Do you: favor this strongly, favor this somewhat, oppose this somewhat, oppose this strongly?

NBC, HARRIS, NYT/CBS: Another of the proposals is to cut further the benefits people can receive from Social Security if they retire early, between ages 62 and 65. Do you favor or oppose this proposal, or don't you know enough to have an opinion?

	NBC 5/81[a]	*Harris 6/81*[b]	*NYT/CBS 6/81*[c]	*NBC 9/81*[d]	*NYT/CBS 5/82*[e]	*NYT/CBS 1/83*[f]
Favor, willing	47%	33%	42%	37%	28%	60%
Oppose, not willing	53	67	58	63	72	40

[a] Among those who heard/read about Reagan's proposals. [b] Let me read you some of the cutbacks the Reagan administration has proposed on Social Security in order to keep Social Security taxes from rising a great deal. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose that cutback . . . To discourage early retirement, those who retire at 62 years of age would receive an average of $246 a month from Social Security rather than the $372 now received. [c] Ronald Reagan has proposed that the Social Security benefits for people who retire early, that is, at age 62 instead of 65, be sharply reduced. Do you approve or disapprove of doing this? [d] Ronald Reagan has proposed cutting the benefits people can receive from Social Security if they retire early, between ages 62 and 65. Do you favor or oppose this proposal, or don't you know enough about it to have an opinion? [e] To reduce the size of the federal deficit, would you be willing or not willing to reduce Social Security payments to people who retire before age 65? [f] The Social Security system is spending more money to pay benefits than it is taking in from Social Security taxes. We want your opinion about some of the proposals that have been made to solve this. To solve the Social Security problem would you be willing or not willing to . . . reduce benefits to people who retire before they're 65 years old?

ROPER, GALLUP, ABC/WP, HARRIS: Under the present Social Security system, a person drawing Social Security benefits cannot earn more than $3000 a year without losing part or all of his benefits. Some people say that this is good because it allows for more jobs for younger people, and it keeps down the costs of Social Security. Others say this limit on earnings should be removed because a person cannot live on Social Security income alone, yet he cannot earn very much money and still draw benefits. How do you feel about the earnings limit for those on Social Security—do you think it should be kept the way it is, or that it should be removed?

	Gallup			*Roper*		*ABC/WP*	*Harris*
	6/52[a]	*10/59*[b]	*10/59*[c]	*6/77*	*6/80*	*5/81*[d]	*6/81*[e]
Keep as is	20%	26%	33%	28%	35%	29%	38%
Should be removed	80	74	67	72	65	71	62

[a] Under the present law, a person 65 years of age or older who receives social security benefits has to give them up if he holds a job and earns more than $50 a month. Do you approve or disapprove of this? [b] A person over 65 who works full time and earns more than $1200 a year cannot receive social security payments. Do you think this law should or should not be changed? [c] Asked after the previous question. Do you think persons over 65 should be permitted to earn as much as they can and still get their full social security payments or not? [d] Currently there is a limit of $5500 on the amount a person 65 or older may earn without having Social Security benefits reduced. Under the Reagan administration proposal, by 1986 a person would be allowed to earn any amount without having Social Security benefits reduced. Do you approve or disapprove of that change? [e] Let me read you some of the cutbacks the Reagan administration has proposed on Social Security in order to keep Social Security taxes from rising a great deal. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose that cutback . . . To encourage people to work longer, the current limit of $5500 a year on outside income that can be earned without a reduction in Social Security benefits would be gradually raised and finally abolished in 1986.

HARRIS, GALLUP, LAT, ABC/WP, A-S: A number of recommendations have been made to help the Social Security system. Please tell me whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of each of the following recommendations? . . . Require workers who do not pay Social Security taxes now—for example, employees of the federal government—to pay these taxes.

	Harris			*Gallup*	*LAT*	*ABC/WP*	*Harris*	*A-S*
	8/78[a]	*1981*	*10/82*[b]	*11/82*[c]	*11/82*[d]	*1/83*[e]	*2/83*[f]	*4/83*[g]
Approve	70%	69%	75%	75%	54%	54%	73%	58%
Disapprove	17	20	23	15	36	33	23	35
Not sure, don't know	12	11	2	10	10	13	4	7

[a] Asked of workers. I'd like to read you some statements people have made about work and retirement. For each, please tell me whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly . . . . Public employees should be brought under the Social Security system. [b] . . . Tell me if you approve or disapprove of each of the following recommendations . . . [c]As I read off some of the ways Social Security could help pay its way, please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of each one: . . . Have employees of the federal government—who are not now covered—included in and paying into the Social Security system? [d]Would you approve of bringing government workers and employees of nonprofit organizations under Social Security coverage, or would you disapprove of that? [e]Reagan has created a committee of economist and Democratic and Republican leaders to recommend plans aimed at getting the Social Security system out of financial trouble. I'm going to mention some of the plans recommended by that committee and for each, please tell me if you favor or oppose that plan, or what? . . . Putting new federal civil service workers into the Social Security system instead of the civil service retirement system. [f]Recently, a special National Commission on Social Security Reform made a series of recommendations for changes in Social Security in order to put that system on a healthier financial basis. Let me ask you about some of the major recommendations that were made and that Congress is now considering. Do you favor or oppose . . . Changing the system so that all new federal employees and all employees of nonprofit organizations would be covered by Social Security and would pay Social Security taxes? [g] . . . All new federal employees will have to join the Social Security system, instead of the current federal pension plan which provides greater benefits to them at higher costs to the taxpayer. Do you: favor this strongly, favor this somewhat, oppose this somewhat, oppose this strongly.

Government Spending and Benefits

SRC, GALLUP, YSW/MAP: The government spends money on many things. On this card is a list of some of the things on which the government spends money. How about . . . Help to older people—do you think the government should be spending more money, less money, or about the same amount?

	SRC		*Gallup*			*YSW/MAP*
	Spring 1961	*Fall 1961*	*5/1972*[a]	*4/1974*[b]	*1976*[b]	*1979*[c]
Spend more	74%	62%	76%	67%	68%	73%
Same amount	19	29	19	28	28	23
Spend less, end altogether	3	3	2	2	3	4
No opinion, don't know	3	6	3	3	2	–
		N=942	*N*=669	*N*=625	*N*=524	

[a]Now I'm going to read off the names of some programs the federal government in Washington is helping to finance. As I mention each program please tell me whether you feel the amount of tax money being spent for each should be increased, kept at the present level, or reduced, or ended altogether. First . . . What about . . . federal programs to help elderly people, for example, by increasing the social security payments they receive? [b]Now I'm going to ask you some questions about government spending. In answering them, please bear in mind that sooner or later all government spending has to be taken care of out of the taxes you and other Americans pay. As I mention each program, tell me whether you think the amount of our tax money now being spent for that purpose should be increased, kept at the present level, reduced, or ended altogether . . . Programs to help elderly people? [c] . . . should be reduced, stay the same, should be increased?

YSW, ROPER, NORC-GSS, SRC/CPS: There's a lot of talk these days about cutting back on government spending. How do you feel—would you like to see the government spend more money, less money, or just about what they are spending now on: Social security?

	YSW *1/76*	*Roper* *2/79*[a]	*SRC/CPS* *Fall/82*[b]	*NORC-GSS* *3/84*[c]	*NORC-GSS* *3/84*[d]	*SRC/CPS* *Fall/84*[e]	*NORC-GSS* *3/85*[c]
Spend more, too little	54%	51%	46%	51%	66%	51%	52%
Spend same, about right	34	29	33	36	26	44	38
Spend less, too much	8	11	12	9	4	4	7
Not sure, don't know	5	10	9	5	3	2	3
				N=968	*N*=479		

[a] . . . Would you go down that list and for each one tell me whether you think we should be spending more than President Carter has proposed in his budget, or spending less than he has proposed, or that he has proposed spending about the right amount on it? . . . Social Security. [b]Same as note c, except "This country is faced . . . federal government . . . How would you rate the amount of federal spending on . . . Social Security? [c]We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. First . . . Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on Social Security? [d]Same as note c, except ". . . protecting Social Security?" [e]If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, which programs would you like to see increased and which reduced—Should federal spending on . . . Social Security . . . be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?

GALLUP, HARRIS, ABC/WP: Do you favor or oppose a cut in federal government spending for: Social Security.

	Harris	*Gallup*	*Harris*				*Gallup*		*ABC/WP*
	3/80[a]	*1/81*	*1/81*[b]	*8/81*[c]	*9/81*[d]	*8/82*[z]	*1/83*[f]	*Sum/84*[g]	*1/85*[h]
Favor cut	24%	21%	21%	18%	22%	10%	13%	14%	5%
Oppose cut	76	79	79	82	78	90	87	86	95

[a]I would like to read you a list of different areas of federal government spending. For each, would you please tell me if you favor a major cut in spending, a minor cut, no cut at all, or would you increase spending in this area? Social Security payments. [b]Now let me ask you about major federal grant programs. Do you favor cutting federal spending on . . . Social Security . . . by 50%, 25%, 10%, or hardly at all? [c]Now let me ask you if the only way to have a chance to balance the federal budget by 1984 was to make sharp cuts in Social Security benefits, would you favor cutting Social Security or would you favor not balancing the federal budget? [d]President Reagan wants to balance the federal budget by 1984, but says he has to cut $75 billion more in order to make the budget balance. If the only way to have a chance to balance the federal budget by 1984 were to make sharp cuts in . . . Social Security . . . , would you favor such cuts, or would you favor *not* balancing the federal budget? [e]The U.S. Senate has passed a new amendment to the constitution which would require that the federal government have a balanced budget each year . . . Would you favor or oppose that constitutional amendment if it meant that . . . Social Security payments to the elderly . . . had to be cut by 26%? [f]It is estimated that the federal government will have a deficit of as much as $200 billion for fiscal 1984—that is, it will spend more than it takes in—unless some steps are taken to reduce the deficit. Basically, there are only a few ways this deficit can be reduced. Please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of each of the following . . . Make cuts in "entitlement" programs such as Social Security, and the like. [g]Same as note f, except: "It is estimated that the federal government will have a deficit of as much as $185 billion for fiscal 1985 . . . . [h]Financial experts say the government now has the largest federal budget deficit in history. Do you think the government should . . . cut Social Security benefits . . . substantially to reduce the budget deficit, or not?

HARRIS: (Varying introductions) . . . If you had to choose, would you prefer to see sharp cuts in Social Security benefits, or *additional* cuts in defense spending?

	9/81	*2/82*[a]	*10/82*[b]	*11/82*[b]	*3/83*[c]	*1/84*[c]
Cut defense	71%	79%	72%	81%	75%	76%
Cut Social Security benefits	22	14	19	12	16	14
Neither (vol.)	3	3	4	3	3	4
Both (vol.)	1	1	1	2	1	1
Not sure	3	3	4	2	5	5

[a]If you had to choose, . . . or cuts in defense spending? [b]If you had to choose, would you prefer to see cuts in federal spending on Social Security benefits or would you prefer cuts in defense spending? [c]If you had to choose, would you prefer to see more cuts in Social Security benefits or *cuts* in the increased defense budget?

TRENDEX: I would like to get your opinion on several areas of important *government* activities. As I read each one, please tell me if you would like the government to do more, do less, or do about the same as they have been on . . . improving Social Security benefits.

	5/78	*11/78*	*2/79*	*5/79*	*8/79*	*2/80*	*5/80*	*8/80*
Do more	65%	66%	65%	66%	66%	66%	64%	66%
Do less	11	12	12	10	9	11	11	11
Do same	24	25	23	24	25	23	25	22
	N=982							
	2/81	*5/81*	*8/81*	*11/81*	*2/82*	*5/82*	*8/82*	*11/82*
Do more	62%	59%	65%	64%	60%	63%	63%	64%
Do less	13	13	10	12	11	11	10	11
Do same	24	27	25	24	29	26	27	25
					N=992	*N*=998		

I noticed you said you would like the government to do more on improving Social Security benefits. Would you favor this increased activity if it required an increase in taxes?

	5/78	*11/78*	*5/79*	*5/81*	*5/82*
Yes	62%	70%	68%	65%	71%
No	38	30	32	35	29
	N=577	*N*=584	*N*=605	*N*=552	*N*=586

Cost of Living Adjustments

HARRIS, NYT/CBS: I'd like to read you some statements people have made about work and retirement. For each, please tell me whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly . . . As the cost of living increases, Social Security payments to retired people should increase also.

	Age 65+ Oversample 1974[a]	*Workers 8/78*	*Workers 8/78*[b]	*Workers NYT/CBS 1/81*[c]	*NYT/CBS 6/81*[d]
Agree, increase	97%	94%	87%	89%	72%
Disagree, decrease or keep same	2	4	11	8	16
Not sure, don't know	1	1	2	3	12

[a]A national adult cross section plus an oversample of respondents age 65 and over. [b]And generally, over the next five years, do you think Social Security benefits should be reduced, kept the same, increased with the cost of living, or increased faster than the cost of living? "Increased" alternatives are combined. [c]Should federal spending on Social Security cost-of-living benefits be increased, decreased, or kept the same? [d]Social security benefits are now increased because of inflation. Do you think these increases have been too high, too low, or about right? Sixteen % "too high," 72% "too low" and "about right."

HARRIS, YSW/MAP, NYT/CBS, ABC/WP: A number of recommendations have been made to help the Social Security system. Please tell me whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove or each of the following recommendations? Reduce cost-of-living adjustments in retirement benefits.

	Harris 1981	YSW/MAP 1981[a]	NYT/CBS May 1982[b]	NYT/CBS Jan 1985[c]	ABC/WP May 1985[d]
Approve, willing, favor	19%	28%	31%	23%	19%
Disapprove, not willing, oppose	72	58	61	73	78
Not sure, no opinion, uncertain	9	14	8	4	2

[a]Change the way cost-of-living increases are made so that social security benefits do not increase as fast as the consumer price index. [b]To reduce the size of the federal deficit, would you be willing or not willing to have the government reduce scheduled cost-of-living increases in Social Security? [c]In order to reduce the size of the federal budget deficit, would you be willing to have the government reduce scheduled cost-of-living increases in Social Security or not? [d]Do you think the government should give people a smaller Social Security cost-of-living increase than they are now scheduled to get as a way of reducing the budget deficit, or not?

NYT/CBS, LAT, ABC/WP, HARRIS, NBC: To reduce the size of the federal deficit, would you be willing or not willing to postpone cost-of-living increases in Social Security benefits?

	NYT/CBS 3/82	LAT 11/82[a]	NYT/CBS 1/83[b]	ABC/WP 1/83[c]	Harris 2/83[d]	Harris 1/85[e]	Harris 2/85[f]	NBC 2/85[g]	Harris 7/85[h]
Willing, approve	39%	43%	53%	54%	43%	31%	56%	24%	42%
Not willing, disapprove	61	57	47	46	57	69	44	76	58

[a]Would you approve of cutting back or delaying Social Security cost-of-living increases, or would you disapprove of that? [b]The Social Security system is spending more money to pay benefits than it is taking in from Social Security taxes. We want your opinion about some of the proposals that have been made to solve this. To solve the Social Security problem would you be willing or not willing to . . . postpone the yearly increases in Social Security benefits? [c](Favor or oppose) Postponing increases in Social Security benefits from this July to next January? [d]Recently, a special National Commission on Social Security Reform made a series of recommendations for changes in Social Security in order to put that system on a healthier financial basis. Let me ask you about some of the major recommendations that were made and that Congress is now considering. Do you favor or oppose . . . Delaying payment of the next cost-of-living adjustments for those now on Social Security from this July to January of next year? [e]A major area of savings under either of these freeze in federal spending proposals would be to do away with cost-of-living adjustments for one year that are now built into several government programs. For each, would you tell me if you would favor or oppose doing away with the cost-of-living adjustments for . . . Social Security? [f]Now let's look at the spending side. To cut the size of the federal budget deficit, would you favor or oppose . . . Disallowing the cost-of-living adjustment on Social Security for one year, but increasing it by how much inflation goes up after that? [g]And what about Social Security? In order to help reduce the federal budget deficit, would you favor or oppose eliminating this year's cost-of-living adjustments to Social Security recipients? [h]Finally, let me ask you about some late compromises that have been suggested to work out the differences between the House and the Senate Budget plans. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose that compromise . . . Go to a new system under which the benefits for Social Security, veterans benefits, and other such programs, would remain the same for a whole year no matter how much inflation goes up, and then would be adjusted by inflation the next year. In other words, the cost-of-living adjustment would be made *every other year* instead of every year as it is now?

Social Security Taxes

NBC, ABC/WP: What about Social Security taxes? Do you think they are much too high, too high, too low or are they about right?

	NBC 6/78	NBC 5/81	ABC/WP[a] 5/81
Much too high	12%	7%	26%
Too high	33	31	
Too low	5	6	11
About right	38	46	54
Not sure, no opinion	12	10	8

[a]Again, just your impression, do you think the Social Security paycheck deductions are too high, too low or about right?

ROPER: I'm going to name some kinds of taxes you might have to pay, and for each type would you tell me whether the taxes you have to pay are excessively high, somewhat high, about right, or extremely low? . . . Social Security taxes.

	5/78	*7/78*[a]	*5/79*[a]	*3/81*[a]
Excessively high	28%	33%	24%	36%
Somewhat high	32	30	30	30
About right	38	36	43	33
Extremely low	1	1	2	2

[a]I'm going to name some different kinds of taxes you may have to pay, and for each type would you tell me whether the taxes you have to pay are excessively high, somewhat high, about right, or extremely low? . . . Social Security taxes.

NYT/CBS, HARRIS: The Social Security system should be strengthened even if it means higher taxes.

	NYT/CBS *3/76*	*NYT/CBS* *4/76*	*HARRIS* *10/82*[a]
Agree, approve	65%	66%	57%
Disagree, disapprove	35	34	43

[a]. A number of recommendations have been made to help the Social Security system. Tell me if you approve or disapprove of each of the following recommendations . . . Keep Social Security benefits as they are now, even if it means having to raise Social Security taxes.

YSW/MAP: It is important to keep increasing social security benefits, even if it means even higher taxes.

	1973	*1975*	*1976*	*1978*	*1980*
Agree	46%	48%	50%	35%	39%
No strong opinion	33	30	31	32	32
Disagree	21	22	18	20	27

HARRIS: Here are some federal tax cuts that have been suggested. For each, tell me if you would favor or oppose that federal tax cut. . . . A cut in Social Security taxes, accompanied by a reduction in certain benefits, which would not be as inflationary as certain other tax cuts.

	Sept 1979	*June 1980*	*Nov 1980*
Favor	32%	35%	33%
Oppose	61	61	63
Not sure	7	4	4